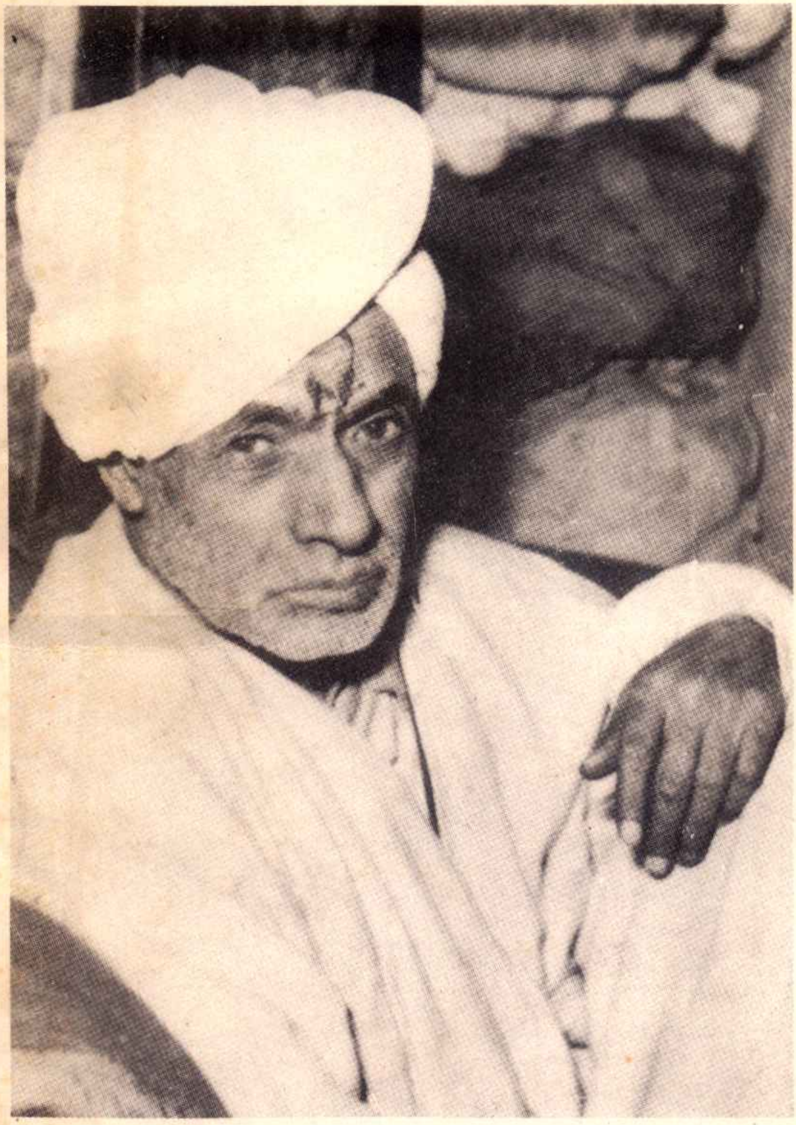
PRAKASH BHAGAVAN GOPINATH



The Saint of All Times

Jagat Guru Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji
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ओं नमो भगवते गोपीनाथाय, प्रकाशरुपाय नमो नमः॥

God and Guru are not really different : they are identical. He that has earned the Grace of the Guru shall undoubtedly be saved and never *for saken*, just as the prey that has fallen into tigers jaws will never be allowed to escape. But the disciple for his part should unswervingly follow the path shown by the Master.

"Nothing is beyond the Guru; No one is above the Guru! Nothing surpasses the Guru; None is greater than the Guru! That is my commandment; I say authoritatively! I Say so authoritatively; that is indeed my commandment."

Guru Geeta:
In the Guru Geeta Lord Shiva beautifully elaborates the sublime role of the Guru in answer to the queries of the Divine Paarvati.
The Guru Geeta deals with the sublime aspect of the Guru, who imparts the high special knowledge to the Shishya (disciple). Without the Guru's grace no progress in the Spiritual field is possible.
The Guru Geeta lays down how the Shishya (disciple) should look upon his Guru and act towards Him.
The Guru Geeta is an ancient Shashtra, which, among other things, mentions the qualities and greatness of a true Guru. In this Shahstra it is also mentioned that a regular recitation of it earns the disciple great merit and his Guru's abundant grace that lead him to the final beatitude.

Two Voices But one Truth
LALLESHWARI
Spiritual institution revealed to me the one and the only one course of Self-education,
To abjure the ephemeral mundane and to ruminate over the perennial Sublime within.
This very self-striven truth turned out to be a happy coincidence with 'Lalla' goading her on to dance in
ecstasy of self-discipline, unmindful of the stark obsessions of Social norms.
BHAGAVAAN GOPINATH JI
Spiritual mental discipline opened before me the one single secret of self-consciousness,
To reject the meshes of worldly life from without.
And to come face to face with the Sublime light within.
This very self-sought revelation made 'Gopi' comprehend the exact import
Of three Syllabic 'OM' and ruminate over it in Divine ecstasy.

Prakash Bhagavan Gopinath

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Editorial

Isha Vasyam Idam Sarvam
Yat Kincha Jagatyam Jagat
Tain Tektain Bhunjitha
Maa Gridha Kasya Swit Dhanam

The first Sloka of Ishavasyopanishad is often described as the quintessence of Hindu spiritual thought. The literal meaning of the Sloka is as follows. What ever is present in this Universe in the form of animate and inanimate objects, is imbued with the presence of God. The mankind is ordained to enjoy the use of these worldly objects "through God" and do the same with a sense of detachment. However, man is warned not to turn possessive about these objects of desire, since it is an imponderable issue to identify as to whom these objects really belong, as these belong to none!

Several points of profound importance are encapsulated in this Sloka. The first and the foremost is the presence of the Divine principle in what ever is to be seen in the Universe. Second, it is emphasised that man is ordained to acquire and use these objects of desire. Man does not have to turn into a recluse, denying himself the desired objects. Third, man is advised to use these objects "Tain Tektain Bhunjitha and with a sense of renunciation "through God". Here the expression "through God" implies acquiring and making use of the worldly objects without Kama, Krodha, Lobha and Moha. In other words, in acquiring and making use of these objects, man ought not to transgress the divine path of morality. Finally, man is cautioned not to be possessive about these objects. The Upanishad asks a startling question as to whom these objects of desire belong, emphasising the transient nature of the so called "ownership" of these worldly objects. The profound answer to this question is provided by the Upnishad itself, when it says–that the worldly objects belong to none! Mahatma Gandhi believed that in this gem of a Sloka, the entire philosophy of life and the secret of the art of living is codified.

From these lofty ideals propounded in the Upanishads, it is imperative upon us to draw appropriate lessons. Acquiring objects of desire and making use of them should be accomplished only within the parameters set by the Divine and through Divine qualities. These Godly qualities are truth, manifested in our unqualified admission of the reality (SATYAM); conscientious effort, that promotes welfare of all (SIVAM) and action characterised by honesty, integrity and steadfastness–emanating beauty of character (SUNDARAM).

While making use of the worldly objects, the Upanishad and advises us to consume with a sense of renunciation and cautions us not to be possessive (Maa Gridha) and obsessed with self-gratification while remaining oblivious to others' needs. By implication, man is ordained to share his possessions with the dispossessed and the same thought is echoed in the following lines of a Kashmiri poet:

Prichha Gair Yeli Lagi
Bar Dith Khenus
Isbath Gachhive Choor...

In case one indulges in self gratification while remaining unmindful of others' needs, keeping the doors of one's conscience closed, such a person is no less than a thief.

It is in this context that a civilised society has to foster the evolution and growth of such institutions which make sharing of both material and non-material resources possible. Through time and space, a variety of political institutions have been tried to achieve an optimal "sharing". Fundamental rights of people and fundamental duties of the State are spelt out in the respective constitutions which are enforced by courts of law and legislatures. To promote an optimal sharing of both resources and opportunities, dictators have also tried their hand, often using questionable means in giving shape to their fuzzy ideas.

Can dictators, legislatures and courts of law decree this optimal sharing? To a certain extent, yes. However, given the inherent inequality of opportunity and talent, there is bound to be a vicious circle of inequity and inequality which would create schisms at various levels of society. For promoting social harmony, mutual understanding and respect for each other–things that are crucial for social order–no parliament or court of law can succeed in enforcing these values. It is here that spiritual (not necessarily religious) organisations can play a unique role. By propagating basic human values such organisations can draw our attention to the immortal words of wisdom enshrined in the scriptures of all religions. The Sloka quoted at the outset is one such example. It is beyond doubt that a "change of heart" can take place if the spiritual organisations help in inculcating human values. As a result, rule of law would be more easy to uphold in societies which otherwise appear to be on the brink of social chaos and lawlessness. At the Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji Foundation such an agenda has been drawn up which can go a long way in inculcating human values.

Dr. B.L. Pandit

In Defence of A Naastika

T.N. Dhar 'Kundan'

I am a 'Naastika', who says, 'na-asti, It is not', yet this statement of mine itself proves 'Asti, It is'. For what is not, cannot be the subject for discussion and, therefore, there cannot be an argument for or against. The Gita says, 'Na-asato vidyate bhavah – naabhavah vidyate satah, a non-being cannot be in existence and what is not in existence cannot be a being. B.G.II. 16' Even then you cannot blame me for making a negative statement or for making no statement at all, in this regard. I am an ordinary common man – one among millions. My life has been summed by an Urdu poet very aptly, 'subuh hoti hai sham hoti hai, umra yunhi tamam hoti hai – we rise with the dawn and retire at the dusk. Thus is spent our entire life.' That being the case I never ponder over this point whether It is or It is not. So even if I say no and someone else says yes, It does not matter. There would always be a connecting question 'what is it that is or is not?' We would be confronted with a near impossible task of defining 'It'. You ask a 'Veda-vitta, one who has the knowledge of Vedas, whether He exists, he will say no, He is the Existence itself. You ask a Yogi whether He has consciousness; he will say no, He is the Consciousness itself. You ask a devout whether He enjoys bliss; he will say no, He is the Bliss itself. All these people have their respective sources of knowledge. I have none. I never sit down and deliberate on the questions; who am I, whence did I come, who is my creator and what is my relationship with him. I simply live my life as it comes. No doubt I have my own ethics, my own morality and my own values. And why not? After all I am a man, a social animal. The society I live in and the humankind at large have their own rules, norms and principles and I am required to abide by them. Like the 'Charvaks' of yore the only source of my knowledge is direct perception, 'Pratyaksha'. Therefore, since I cannot see any thing that I could call God, I frankly say, 'Naasti–it is not.' Then why fault me for my sincerity.

No doubt the nature, its astonishing characteristics, the precision and order prevailing and the beauty in which it abounds often bewilder me. You could ask me why I do not take recourse to reason and inference, 'Anumana' like the 'Vaisheshikas' and treat this splendour as the sufficient proof of the existence of God. But then the Scientists, the Botanists, the Astronomers, the Biologists *et al*, have been providing all sorts of explanations, cogent and well reasoned, for all the astonishing features of the nature. They account for every phenomenon with the help of the tools of pigments, chromosomes, gravity, relativity, genes, molecules, atoms, cells and so on. All these scientific analyses create doubts in my mind about the existence of any super natural power. I am aware of what the famous French philosopher has said in this regard. He has

said that since all our faculties of desiring, thinking, knowing acting etc.; are circumscribed by limitations, there must be a power, which has limitless faculties and such a power can be termed as God. This power ought to be omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. That power ought to be the supreme cause of this universe. Swami Krishnananda has said, in his book titled 'The Philosophy of Life' that the concept of God presupposes five postulates: (i) God must be one. (ii) He must be uncaused reality. (iii) He must be causeless cause. (iv) He must be above space and time and (v) He must be conservation of all values and yet transcending them. All these flowery statements appear to me to be a mere rhetoric. I see everything cyclic in character, beginning-less and, therefore without an ending. Morning, day, evening, night and again morning. Spring, summer, autumn, winter and again summer. Seed, sapling, tree, leaves, flowers, fruits and again seed. Likewise, birth, infancy, childhood, youth, old age, death and again rebirth. Nature has its own laws and every thing happens according to a set pattern. Every thing moves on a set pre-determined orbit. A common man like me sees all this, gets used to it and never bothers to go beyond the realm of direct perception. He never finds any necessity for fathoming the phenomenon or delving deep into it. The other sources of knowledge like inference and anomaly, 'Anuman' and 'Upaman' may be relevant for a logician. These are meaningless for him. As regards the testimony of scriptures, he either accepts it as a charter of faith or never bothers to go into its validity or veracity. For him what is evident needs no proof and what is not needs no probing. Sometimes miseries and hardships are so vexing for him that he outright rejects the existence of God. An Urdu poet has addressed God in these words: 'Tang hai tere bandon pe khudai teri, Aadmi jurrate inkar tak aa pahuncha hai. Your lordship is so taxing for your subjects that the man has taken bold to deny your very existence.' Scriptures of all religions are regarded as divine gospels. The Vedas are 'Apaurusheya'—which no man has authored. The bible is God-sent. The Koran is a revelation of God to the Prophet. All these scriptures and holy books testify the existence of God. Believing in this 'Shabda' or the scriptural testimony would, ipso facto, mean accepting their divine character, which in itself is in doubt. I am aware of the variety of arguments and proofs put forward by theists and believers in support of their theory of the existence of God. There is this cosmological argument that all contingent events imply an eternal substance which is not contingent. Since we have finite things there must be something infinite. Sometimes a henological argument is advanced that the concept of relativity like more or less signifies the existence of a manifestation with a maximum value. The relative imperfection implies that there must be something perfect and it is this that is termed as God. Then we are given a teleological argument based on the view that every substance has a value and a purpose. The existence of God as a supreme intelligence is inferred on the basis of the purposive adaptation seen in nature and the order and arrangement observed in its functioning.

Of course, there are writings and

statements of great thinkers and philosophers who have in various ways established the existence of God. Patanjali, the propounder of the Yoga system has described God as 'unsurpassed seed of omniscience who is unaffected by changes.' Udayana, the well-known logician (naiyayika) has put forward a number of explanations in support of the existence of God. Some of these are as follows: (i) The world of perception is in the nature of an effect and its cause is God. (ii) Things in the universe are well supported, its parts are held together so that they do not fall apart and there is a systematic grouping of the ultimate atoms into dyads and molecules. There has to be a wise organiser and an able manager for all this system and design, which is God. (iii) There has to be a dispenser of the fruits of action. (iv) God is the source of all knowledge. Swami Sivananda has said that the self of every individual bears testimony to the existence of the Universal Self, the Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omnipresent who governs and controls the vast universe. Swami Krishnananda calls 'Brahman' as 'Nishprapancha' i.e. one who is free from the universe and 'Prapanchopasam' i.e. a Being in whom the universe ceases to be. He defines God as the source of inspiration for the world, the supreme cause, one who supports and animates creation by His immanence, the Divine Self and the inner Ruler of the cosmos, as also the potential power who can do undo or transform the universe as a whole. At the other end of the scale there are the great souls like Buddha who are tight lipped about the existence of God. There are also great spiritual leaders like Mahavira, the last Tirthankara who clearly negate the existence of God and yet preach and prescribe a philosophy that makes our life meaningful. In the face of this plethora of views and divergent opinions, it is natural for a man of common prudence to be confused and to get bewildered in no small measure. I cannot, therefore, be blamed for relying on my direct perception and say 'no, I do not see anything existing that I could call God,' and be branded as a Naastika. In this age of crumbling barriers, shrinking distances and dwindling divisions, one is tempted to turn to other religions and faiths to seek an answer to the question whether there is a God. We find that every religion has accepted His existence and that every religion claims that it is preaching His message. If God were one, His message were one, there would be only one faith or religion. Why then is there this multiplicity of religions in this world? Why are there a number of divisions in the same religion? There are Catholics, Protestants and Presbyterians among Christians. Muslims have Sunnies, Sufis and Shias. Thervada, Mahayana and Heenyana from the different branches among Buddhists. Shwetambara and Digambara are the two prominent branches among Jains. Even among Hindus, whose religion is called 'Sanatana Dharma' or universal faith and infinite doctrine, we have different ideologies like Non-dualism, Dualism, Qualified Monism etc. The Vedas mention more than 33,000 gods. We have worshippers of Shiva, Vishnu and Shakti not to speak of other gods and deities. This situation is strange and baffling for a common man. Even then all these religions emphasise that God does exist and He is only one. They put forward very interesting

arguments in support thereof. For instance let us see the proofs advanced by St. Thomas Aquinas, which are as follow: (a) All motions pre-suppose something which is not subject to motion. (b) A causal chain must end at an uncaused cause. (c) All finite substances point to some infinite substance. (d) The various grades of perfection and imperfection seen in everything refer to the existence of something absolute and perfect. (e) The harmony in nature at once projects and intelligent creator and a wise architect. According to him this motionless, uncaused cause, infinite, perfect and intelligent creator is God.

In order to try and convince myself about these multifarious logical sounding pustulates, I am tempted to ask why has God created the universe, if He really exists. Is this creation the result of His desire 'Iccha'? Is it His way of dispensing justice 'Nyaya', that He should have entangled us in an endless syndrome of actions and enjoyment of the fruits of actions? Or is it just His hobby 'Leela' to create, sustain and then destroy the creation? Are we puppets in His hands? If so, why punish us for our sins and reward us for our virtues? If not, then we are the masters of our destiny and in that case where does He fit in? These queries baffle us and create doubts in our minds about His existence and we are labelled as 'Naastikas.' Then Shankara comes forward and announces 'Brahma satyam, Jagan-mithya–God alone is the Truth, the world is a myth, an illusion.' Immediately this is refuted by the eminent Acharyas, Ramanuja, Madhwacharya and others. The Kashmir Shaiva philosophers maintain that the world cannot be an illusion. Since the creator is a reality, the creation has to be real. Swami Shivananda talks of two types of power, the projecting power and the enveloping power. He says when the former is predominant the appearance is an illusion 'Maya.' When the latter is predominant the appearance is ignorance 'Avidya.' According to him 'Jiva', the individual soul is consciousness defined by the principles constituting individuality. It is the embodied being limited to the psychophysical states. That which transcends all these barriers of time, space and body as also the limitations of sorts is God, the 'Isvara.' Some have perceived His existence by dialectical reasoning. Some have perceived Him through their intuitive powers. Some have picturised Him by the dint of their unflinching faith and devotion. Others have accepted Him due to their regard for the wisdom of the seers and sages, peers and prophets. Yet others envisage Him by their experimental conditions in relation to the world of change. Thus the individual being, the world and God are inter related and their existence, per se, is reciprocally dependent for those who believe that God does exist. For others there are only two entities, the self and the world at large.

The fact of the matter is that the supra mental phenomenon cannot be gauged with the help of the mundane intellect, logic or reason, which have their own limitations. The mortal and finite apparatus is of no use in the laboratory of immortality and infinity. The problem with us is that we raise the questions of higher planes and try to find their answers at our own lower plane. We attempt measure the height of the sky but the sky eludes us. We make an effort to weigh the air in the atmosphere

and the weights and measures fail us. We are astonished because the same truth can be viewed from different angles and consequently described in multiple ways. 'Ekam sat viprah bahudhah vadanti – The truth is one and the wise explain it in many ways.' Yet we cannot comprehend the abstract descriptions of God. He is stated to be ''Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram''–moral Truth, ethical Good and aesthetic Beauty. He is characterised as ''Sat, Chit, Anand''– physical Being, mental Consciousness and spiritual Bliss. Baffled as we are, by all these incomprehensible descriptions, we are forced to view our own self as an object to be known and our own self as the subject of knowledge. We need not raise apparently irrelevant questions lest we should get silly answers. We as poor individual souls are in soup. As Swami Vivekananda would have it, 'The soul is like a tiny boat in a tempest raised one moment on the foaming crest of a billow and dashed down into a yawning chasm the next, rolling to and fro at the mercy of good and bad actions–a powerless, helpless wreck, in an ever raging, uncompromising current of cause and effect.' Yet in the words of Max Mueller, 'There is in man an irrepressible desire for continued existence. It shows itself in life in what we may call self-defence. It shows itself at the end of life and at the approach of death in the hope of immortality.' Alas would every 'Naastika' have the good fortune of meeting a guide like Shri Ramakrishna, as was the case with Narendra. On being asked whether he had seen God, he would emphatically declare, ' Yes I have seen Him as I see you now.' Then this 'I' circumscribed by all sorts of limitations and suffering from the malady of considering himself as the doer, possessor and the enjoyer shall get transformed into the 'I', universal yet transcending the universe, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. Till then the Naastika will continue to exist and he will continue to say, 'Na-asti, It is not'. And we cannot fault him for that. ■

Bhakti, The Yoga Supreme

Role of Some Sáivite Saints of Kashmir

K.L. Swaroop

[1]भक्ति उद्रेकाद्विरक्तस्य, यादृशी जायते मति:।
सा शक्ति:शांकरी नित्यं भावयेत्-तांतत: शिव:।। Vijnanbhairua–|2|

When Bhakti is selfless an directed towards God with full devotional fervour, it assumes the form of 'Para-Bhakti' which according to sage Narada–the torch bearer of Bhakti Yoga–is simultaneously 'Prem–rupa' and 'Amrita–rupa.' And when this

[1] The intuitive faculty that springs up as a result of abundantly over-flowing Bhakti in a perfectly detached person is SAKTI OF SANKARA. One should constantly mediate on SAKTI. Attainment of Siva-hood follows.

highest ideal of nector like love for God is achieved, the Gordian knot of the riddle of the Universe and existence is cut as-under resulting in the divine play between the consciousness of the Bhakta and God consciousness. Swami Vivekananda has described this superb stage like this :

"When the highest ideal of love is reached, philosophy is thrown away; who will care for it? Freedom, salvation, nirvana all are thrown away; who care to be free while in the enjoyment of the divine love".

Sri. Ramakrishna Paramahansa unequivocally declared that in Kaliyuga Bhakti alone works. The Paramahansa envisages three stages of 'Para Bhakti' viz. Bhava, Mahabhava & Prema. Chaitanya Maha Prabhu belonged to the third stage. The Bhagavadgita considered to be the quintessence of the vedas and the upnisadas has the powerful current of Bhakti running through all the verses. It is for this season it is called 'Bhakti Pradhan Grantha'. Bhagavaan Gopinathji an ardent Saivite Saint of Kashmir and an Ishwara[2] Koti was once approached by a devotee who desired to know who the Bhagavaan's Guru was. The Bhagavaan pointed out to the Bhagawadagita. Acharya Abhinavagupta, the doyen of Kashmir Sáivism chose to write a detailed commentary on the Bhagawadagita[3]. Adi Sánkara, the highest authority on Advaita Vedanta is of the firm view that among the things conducive to liberation, Bhakti alone holds the supreme place. The purpose of narrating all these details is to emphasise that among the various spiritual disciplines prescribed in the scriptures for the elevation of the soul and its liberation, Bhakti is one the top.

In the backdrop of what has been said about 'Para-Bhakti' in the foregoing lines, let us revert to the sub-title viz. Role of Shaivite Saints of Kashmir in Para-Bhakti. We are tempted to start with Utpala, the great seer who lucidly explained the unique docrine of 'Pratyabijna' now acclaimed as one of the finest pieces of metaphysical concept about the Ultimate Reality, both by the scholars of East and West. Since we are concerned with what Utpala has bequeathed to us as a 'Bhakta', we shall refer to his 'Sivastotravali' compiled later by Acharya Aditya Raja. The 'Sivastotravali' comprises twenty 'Stotras' (450 verses in all) which according to the legend were actually Utpalas intuitive expressions of intese feelings of Bhakti vis-à-vis his beloved Lord Shiva, oblivious of the surrounding world in an intoxicated state of mind, as it were. The grandeur of these expressions of feelings par-excellence lies in the fact that no where the tenets of Advaits Saivism have been compromised. Despite lofty nature of the philosophy of the system, Utpala under a genuine compulsion of his inner-most feeling, has no hesitation in declaring that in 'Shiva-Marga'[4] Bhakti alone triumphs. He unequivocally pronounces that nectar-like down-pour of Bhakti can be enjoyed by such 'Bhaktas' as live in the world of name and form with its ups and down but don't get tainted. The 'Bhaktas' who constantly

[2] ISHWARKOTI... A perfected soul born with a special spiritual message for humanity. Sri Ramkrishna Paramhansa.

[3] मोक्षकारणसामग्रयां भक्तिरेव गरीयसी।
......................................।।31।। विवेकचूड़ामनि।

[4] अमाये शिवमार्गेऽस्मिन् भक्तिरेका प्रशस्यते।।2।।
श्रीशिवस्तोत्रावली।

think of and repeat 'Shiva Dhvani (Lord Sivas name) are really exalted ones. Addressing Lord Siva, Uptala says : "Absorption[5] in Thy thought and separation from Thee are verily 'Shukha' and 'Dhuka' respectively to me". He is bold enough to make a grievance to the Lord that when he has been graced by Him by accepting him as His 'Dasa' why is not he being considered for His 'Darshna' and the service of His[6] lotus feet.

Abhinavagupta, acclaimed as the brightest star of Kashmir Shaivism happened to be the grand-disciple of Utpala. He has also given due place to 'Bhakti' even though we always find him blissfully swimming in the nectar-like ocean of 'Jhana'. While dwelling on how grace of the Lord descends on the worldly people, he gives first place to Bhakti yoga[7]. Praying to Devi, the dynamic aspect of the ultimate Reality pervading the whole of the cosmos he seeks a favour as a true 'Bhakta' thus : "Let there be not a single fraction of time, in which I am without Thy adoration, repetition of Thy name and Thy worship, O Devi[8]".

Stava-Chintamani is a remarkable work of Bhatta Navayana comprising one hundred and twenty verses on Para Bhakti. The verses appear very simple but are surcharged with the fervour of 'Bhakti', the recitation of which instantaneously produces a down-pour of a nectar providing spiritual solace to the reciter and to those who mentally associate themselves with the recitation. With profound sincerity ad simplicity Bhatta Narayana prays : "As long as we live, so long, O Lord, we may have through Thy grace, a state of mind always absorbed in Thee[9]".

The 'Stuti Kusumanjli' of Jagaddhar Bhatta, who graced the land of Kashmir sometime in the middle of fourteenth century, is a monumental work on Bhakti. It is basically a 'Bhakti-kavya' but since, rhetorically speaking, the work conforms to all the norms and requirements of a 'Maha-Kavya' it is classified as that also. It comprises thirtynine Stotras totalling as many as 1439 verses of different meters. Suffices to say here that floridity, simplicity and sweetness together with appealing and attractive figures of speech like simile, metaphor, alliteration, etc. which according to Mammata the great rhetorician of Kashmir and author of 'Kavya Prakash' are essential ingredients of a Maha-Kavya are all abundantly and vividly, present in the Stuti Kusumanjali. Be that as it may, we are more concerned with the divine fervour and vibrating nature of the 'Strotas' emiting the fragrance of 'Bhakti' which intoxicates Bhaktas. Addressing the Lord, Jagaddhar Bhatta says : "O Lord, Thy Bhakti' alone is our refuge, we are shelterless and unprotected. O Destroyer[10] of the Cupid, the divine brilliance of Thy Bhakti can only

5 सौख्यमेष भवता समागम: स्वामिना विरह एव दु:खिता
।। 1।। श्रशिवस्तोत्रावली (13-1)

6 दासधाम्नि विनियोजितोऽप्यहं
स्वेच्छयैव परमेश्वर त्वया।
दर्शनेन न किमस्मि पात्रित:
पादसंवहनकर्मणावि वा। श्रीशिवस्तोत्रावली-(13-10)

7 कदाचिद्भक्तियोगेन कर्मणा विद्ययापिवा।
....
....
ससारिणोऽनुग्रहणाति विश्वस्य जगत: पति। तंत्रालोक।

8 स्तुति: जपार्चन चिन्तन वर्जिता।
न खलु कांचन कालकलास्तुमे।।

9 स्तुतिजपार्चनचिन्तनवर्जिता
न खलु काचन कालकलापि मे।।

destroy the ignorance inherent in us. In this world of delusion which is just like a prison of darkness full of miseries, divine rays given out by Thy, Bhakti can save us".

Panchestvi authorised by Dharmacharya is a hymn on the Saguna and Nirguna aspect of Devi. As is obvious from the very title of the work, it consists of five 'Stavas' with a total of 146 verses. In its quality of devotional fervour, its runs neck to neck to Saundarya Lahiri of Adi Shankaracharya. In every verse of Panchestvi we observe the splendour of 'Bhakti'. The mere recitation of the verses charges the soul of the reciter and all those who associate themselves with the recitation mentally. The Advaite thought of Kashmir Shaivism is inextricably woven with the contents of the work. The author says : "O Bhagwati[11] You are Shiva; You are Shakti; You are the Doctrine of the system; You are the originator of the Doctrine, You are soul; You are the occult powers; You are all the three Ganas, You are ignorance; You are knowledge; You are sum and substance of all, O Devi, we cannot perceive anything that is other than you." Towards the conclusion Dharmacharya earnestly prays to Devi thus: "While I am in this mortal frame I may spend the days of my life absorbed in Thee, singing Thy praiser and adoring You."

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[10] एवं देव प्रभेव स्मरहर मकलद्वीपदीपस्य भर्त्तु-
र्भासामासादयन्ती विषम तमतम: खण्डने चण्डिमानम्।
कारागारानुकारे पशिभवति भवे बद्धमोहान्धकारे
भावत्की भक्तिरेका शरणमशरणत्राणविश्राणिनी न:।।

Stuti-Kusumanjali 17-28.

[11] शिवस्त्वं शक्तिस्त्वं त्वमसि समया त्वं समयिनी
त्वमात्मा त्वं दीक्षा त्वमयमणिमादिर्गुणगण:।
अविद्यात्वंविद्या त्वमसिनिखलं त्वं किमपरं
पृथक्त्वत्तं त्वत्तो भगवति न वीक्षामह इमे।।

Panchastavi 5-35.

Seminar on "Remembering Lal Ded in Modern Times", held on 12.11.2000 at Pamposh Enclave, New Delhi : A Review.

Prof. S. Bhatt

The above national seminar was held jointly by Kashmiri Education, Culture and Science Society, Pamposh Enclave and Nityanand Shastri Research Institute attended by over 100 participants including mostly eminent and leading scholars from Kashmiri Pandit community and some other scholars. Some of the noted scholars included Dr. S.S. Toshkani (Convenor for the Seminar), Mr. M.K. Kaw, Secretary, Education, Government of India and President KECSS who was the Chairman of Seminar, Mr. P.N. Kachru, Mr. J.N. Kaul, President, AIKS, Mr. C.L. Gadoo, President of Kashmiri Samiti, Professor A.N. Dhar, Jawahar Kaul, S. Bhatt, C.L. Sapru, B.B. Dhar, Mrs. Nirja Matoo, Ramesh Bamzai, Sudhir Sopori, etc. Some prominent intellectuals from the Biradari included M/s. D.N. Kaul, (IPS), A.N. Kaul, (Editor in Chief, Kaushor Samachar), D.P. Bhan, P.N. Bhat, Bhawnesh Kaul, D.N.

Munshi, S.N. Pandita, Gopi Nath, Dr. Sushila Bhan, Dr. (Mrs.) Krishna Bhatt, Dr. (Mrs.) Gita Bamzai, S.N. Bhatt Haleem, S.N. Kaul Reazi, B.L. Kaul Chaman, etc.

The major focus of this Seminar was to revive the spiritual heritage of Lal Ded for the modern world. Lal Ded's contributions have been known to Kashmiri society in particular. The time has come to spread her message to the world at large. Mr. M.K. Kaw in his keynote address stressed the fact that Lal Ded has been accepted as a great spiritual being by all communities in Kashmir. Her message, he said, was for the whole world indeed as we need more harmony and human love at this period of history. Dr. S.S. Toshkhani in his very erudite address demolished some historical errors and reiterated Lal Ded's role as a spiritual seer in Saivism and Vedanta. Of-course, she loved all of humanity and was held in high esteem by people of all religions, said Dr. Toshkhani. Prof. S. Bhatt highlighted Lal ded's role for promoting inter-religious harmony, harmony with nature which is the basis of current global environment movement, and a synthesis of a life of householder and the spiritual. She advocated non-renunciation with suitable moral and spiritual precepts. Prof. Bhatt, along with others in the audience, paid a glowing tribute to scholars like Prof. Jayalal Kaul who had worked upon Lal Ded's Vaakhs and published an outstanding book on Lal Ded under the auspices of the Sahitya Academy in 1973. Mr. A.N. Kaul, the editor in Chief of Kaushor Samachar, made a reference to the scholarly volume bought out in 1971 on Lal Ded by Kashmiri Samiti called the Lal Ded number.

Many notable speakers presented their papers describing Lal Ded as one of the greatest spiritual leaders of mankind, and inspiring poet, a seer for all times and one whose ideas are most relevant in modern world. Internationally, there is need to do further research on her Vaakhs and on her social and spiritual philosophy. Her Vaakhs also reflect the modern thematic origins of science philosophy, as Prof. Ilya Prigogine a noble laureate in Physics points out that there is a connection between parapsychology and quantum physics. Science and spiritualism can be combined based on Lal Ded's ideas in order to provide a new cosmic vision that mankind is looking for.

The Seminar was a great success. In the words of Mr. J.N. Kaul, the President of AIKS, the Kashmiri Pandit community has woken up to new life, creativity and dynamic progress.

A Re-appraisal of Lal Ded

A.N. Dhar

Reappraising Lal Ded as a saint-poet and mystic is the need of the hour, and the present seminar offers an excellent opportunity to the participants to engage themselves in serious deliberations on the issue. Perhaps this task has to focus first on exploring what the genuine poetic outpourings or *vaakhs* of the great saint

are (to be sifted from the spurious ones). Then a reinterpretation of the genuine utterances is to be attempted with a view to removing a number of misconceptions and erroneous notions about Lal Ded, some of them obviously based on deliberate distortions and even lies spread to serve a vested interest. All this will call for rigorous research – that is a challenging task in view of our present inaccessibility to the relevant and some indispensable materials lying unused in the State Research Library, that was years back shifted to the Kashmir University campus at Hazratbal, Srinagar.

In spite of the severe handicaps of Lal Ded scholarship, fresh research studies on the saint-poet can take off from the pioneering work in the background accomplished by such scholars as Bhaskar Razdan, Grierson and Barnett, Sir richard Temple and Pt. Anand Kaul. To my mind, Prof. Jayalal Kaul's *Lal Ded*, a subsequent publication, is a monumental little volume that can serve as a guide-book to the prospective researchers. Compact and packed as it is with documentary details, it has to be tapped with care as a rich resource, being highly useful as a secondary source material. Professor Kaul has also done a pioneering job in raising sensible and legitimate questions about the *authenticity* of Lalla *Vaakh* - how best to establish it through a stylistic study of the utterances as they have come down to us by word of mouth. His intelligent grasp of what linguistic change, over a period of time, in its bearing on the *Vaakhs,* involves in a cross-cultural context is praise-worthy. Some of the crucial observations he has made further on the so-called evidence of various influences on Lal Ded are valuable too. And his forceful rebuttal of the claims some scholars have made about the fusion of various schools and creeds in her *vaakh*, as if consciously attempted by her, deserves to be specially complemented. His total rejection of the evidence put forward by a couple of scholars that Lal Ded at a later stage of her life came under the decisive influence of Islam, followed by her so-called conversion to the new faith, is based on sound and convincing arguments.

Prof. Jayalal Kaul's outstanding contribution to Lal Ded scholarship in the book titled *Lal Ded* has been followed by another accomplished work on the saint-poet – authored by Prof.. B.N. Parimoo, which too is a significant contribution in terms of his detailed literary translation and interpretation of the *vaakhs*. Its chief merit lies in the chapter-wise sequencing of the verse-sayings aimed at demonstrating Lalla's spiritual ascent to the plane of supreme consciousness and her union with *Parma Siva* as a *yogini*. Both Prof. Parimoo and his predecessor, Prof. Jayalal Kaul, have maintained that Lalla followed the Saivite technique of meditation based on Kundalini yoga.

Subsequent works on Lal Ded brought out in the past three decades or so include Nilakanth Kotru's *Lal Ded : Her Life and Sayings* published in 1989, a special 'Lal Ded' number of the KOSHUR SAMACHAR brought out in the year 1971 and Prof. R.N. Kaul's *Kashmir's Mystic : Poetess Lal Ded alias Lalla Arifa* published in 1999. Nilakanth Kotru too has attempted his own English translations of the *vaakhs*, falling in line with the vaakh-sequence adopted by Jayalal Kaul before him. His meanings and explanations are plain and

simple, reflecting, at the same time, a good grasp of the doctrines of Kashmir Saivism. As regards Prof. R.N. Kaul's recent book on Lal Ded, it has some novel features that cannot escape the attention of the thoughtful reader. It is readable and enjoyable in view of its literary charm and lucidity of expression. The interpretation of the *vaakhs* points very much to a perceptive and assimilative mind behind the book - inasmuch as the content of the *vaakhs* is made intelligible to the average reader, appealing, at the same time, to the scholar through the author's beauty of expression. The book would have gained further in value if the author had provided adequate details about the essentials of *Trika* or *Kashmir Saivism* and mysticism in general in his account of Lalla as *Kashmir's Mystic* (which is the main title of the book).

The Special number of the *KOSHUR SAMACHAR* mentioned earlier is a very useful source material for the Lal Ded scholar who cannot, in the prevailing circumstances, have an easy access to the materials available in the State Research Library. Besides providing English translations of Lalla's verse-sayings in a separate section, the journal contains useful and learned articles in English and Hindi contributed by many competent writers from our community and also by some well-known writers like Abdul Ahad Azad, Amin Kamil and Prof. Rehman Rahi. It also contains two short write-ups in English contributed by Swami Laxman Joo and J. Rudrappa.

I should like to mention two more materials on Lal Ded before I switch on to the other related aspects of the topic of this paper. I was able to lay my hands on the small volume titled *Lallashwari ; Remembered by Swami Mukhtananda* published in 1981. The Preface by Swami Prajnanand and the Introduction by Joseph Chilton Pearce, both thoughtfully written, are valuable as informative pieces on Lal Ded and her sayings. Then follow English renderings of the sayings in the form of poems attempted in the free-verse pattern. These poems capture the essence of the *vaakhs* without observing accuracy in keeping close to the form and content of the original text. They could be described as "transcreations" rather than translations. Joseph Chilton Pearce justifies this feature by observing that "A true translation is always a re-creation".

The other book I acquired very recently was published in early 1999. It bears the title *"Voice of Experience" : Lall Vaakh of Lall Ded/Lali Shori of Kashmir* and contains English translations of 154 vaakhs attempted by the author, B.N. Sopori. The *vaakhs* are grouped under four headings chosen as the titles of individual chapters – 'Sadhana', 'Adventure in Space', 'Fortitude', 'Precepts' and 'Discourses with Guru (Master)'. In the Foreword, the author himself, as translator and commentator, describes his particular approach to the study of the *vaakhs* – involving scientific terms and concepts such as 'vibration', 'frequency', 'wave-length' etc. which, interestingly it seems to me, are drawn from his professional vocabulary as a former employee of the Dept. of Telecommunication. Since he is not a man of any special literary expertise, he has not been able to develop his ideas into a coherent and systematic theory sustainable throughout the study. He manages somehow

to communicate intelligibly in English though his command of the language is faulty at places. All the same, he seems knowledgeable about the import of the *vaakhs* in terms of actual yogic practice. As he informed me himself, he plans to bring out a second volume as a sequel to the present one, which will contain another 150 *vaakhs* or so. I wonder if all the *vaakhs* the author has collected are authentic as Lal *Vaakh*. The present volume has sold well despite what I see as its shortcomings. The author's attempt is a laudable one.

That Lalla was a rare genius – both as a saint and as a poet – is disputed by none, and is acknowledged by all Kashmiris, Hindus and Muslims alike. It is essentially through the *vaakhs*, which she uttered as direct outpourings from her heart rather than as consciously wrought poetic compositions, that Lalla become very popular as a saint-poet in Kashmir. As professor Jayalal Kaul very aptly observes, there was no polarization between Kashmir Hindus and Muslims in her time; the *vaakhs* made a tremendous impact on the collective psyche of the two communities. Perhaps most Muslims being only fresh converts to their new faith were as receptive to the wise sayings of the saint-poet as the Hindus who then must have still been in the majority as the natives of the Valley. Even after the latter got reduced to a minority in consequence of conversions, lalla continued to be held in reverence as 'Lal Ded' by both the communities. She was also called 'Lalleshwari' by one community and 'Lalla Arifa' by the other, showing that both thought very highly of her spiritual attainment in accordance with their religious perceptions. If a Muslim hailed her as an 'Arifa', he didn't mean to convey that she had been influenced by Islam in any remarkable way or had accepted a new faith. Later, some Muslim scholar made deliberate distortion of facts in asserting that lalla had experienced inward "illumination" only after coming into contact with Sayyid Hussain Somnani and had then got converted to Islam. This wishful "myth" can't stand the test of reason and must be exploded. It has, however, done the mischief : I recall having read in a secondary source-material on Lal Ded that the Saint-poet has been mentioned as a convert to Islam in some encyclopaedia. If Muslim scholars draw a parallel between Rabia and Lalla as love-mystics, this seems a befitting comparison and should be acceptable to us. But to distort history and try to perpetuate a lie about Lalla's faith should be rebutted with convincing arguments as Prof. Jayalal Kaul has already done on the basis of his sound Lal Ded scholarship.

Significantly, it is Lalla's younger contemporary, Nunda Rishi or Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali, acknowledged by the Kashmiri Muslims as well to have been blessed by her at his birth, who has paid her this befitting and glowing tribute :

तस पद्मापोरूँचि लले,
तमि गले अमृत पीवा।
स्वह साऽन्य अवतार ल्वले,
त्युथुय में वर दितो दीवा।।

That Lalla of Padmanpora (Pampore) –
She drank
Her fill of divine nectar;
She was indeed an *autar* of ours (dearly loved)
O God, grant me the same boon!

There are three crucial sacred terms used in the Kashmiri text of the tribute that are obviously derived from our *shastras : deeva* (God), *autar* (incarnation) and *var* (boon). The words confirm that Nunda Rishi held Lalla in great esteem and looked upon her as a saint of remarkable achievement, having all the qualities of a divine incarnation. Evidently, he aspires to emulate her, craving to have "his fill of nectar" too as a boon from God. Keeping in view the content of the verse quoted, the responsive reader when informed of the following remark about Lalla made by Sir Richard Temple in his book titled *The Word of Lalla* (C.U.P., 1924) will hardly give any credence to it (the remark) but reject it as a piece of misinformation:

> Lalla is said to have been influenced by the great national patron saint of the Kashmiris named Noor-ud-din Wali of Tsrar-i-Sherif. (See p.3. of Richard Temple's book).

Prof. Jayalal Kaul, quoting the remark in his book titled *Lal Ded*, makes his observation on it in these words :

> As every Kashmiri, Hindu or Muslim, sees it, the truth is the other way round. Besides, Lal Ded should have been sixty, if not more, when Nunda Rishi was born. (Quoted from p.72 of Jayalal Kaul's *Lal Ded*)

Yes, the real truth is that as a saint, Nunda Rishi was greatly influenced by Lal Ded. It was his unqualified veneration for the saint-poetess that had a great impact on the devout Muslims, his followers. That explains why for several centuries Kashmiri Muslims have continued to own her, delighting in memorizing and quoting her sayings as Kashmiri Hindus do, singing the *vaakhs* on appropriate occasions – festive events such as marriage ceremonies and at cultural functions. Another important tribute to the spiritual genius of Lal Ded has been paid by Shams Faqir in his poem

ज़ान मिलुॅनाव भगवानस सूत्य':
ज़ानुॅवुॅनि जान कर प्राणस ज्ञानस,
ज़ान मिलुॅनाव भगवानससूॅत्य।
पूज़ायि करूॅनि गऽयि मंज़ करमुॅवानस,
धरमुँ शास्तुँरनिस बुत खानस।
को'र ललि यिकुॅवटुॅ आकाश प्राणस,
ज़ानमिलुॅनाव भगवानस सूॅत्य।
सो'दुॅ बाऽय वदुना को'र पाऽन्य पानस,
दिवुर मगिं क्याह दिवुर वटस।
ललि त्रोव ज़ल नो'ट मंज़ पो'तुल्य खानस,
ज़ान मिलुॅनाव भगवानस सूॅत्य।
छलुॅ गऽयि ललुॅ मऽच़ शुरायार खानस,
पिलुॅ तमि को'र ज़गि तार तरनस।
कलुॅ तमि च़ोटनय नफसि शेतानस,
ज़ानमिलुॅनाव भगवानस सूत्य।
सबख तति रूदुयतस अबख छानस,
राजदाऽन्य तऽम्य लऽज़ वाऽरानस।
ललि ओसॅ निलुॅबठ ललुॅवुन पानस,
ज़ान मिलूॅनाव भगवानस सूत्य।
व्वपदीश करनि गयि नुदूँ रेशानस,
ज़ानमिलुॅ नाव भगुॅवानस सूत्य।
छे'पि छे'पिरसगिदुंन शाह हमदानस,
ज़ान मिलुॅनाव भगवानस सूॅत्य।
शम्स फऽकीर नाऽमी परकाटस,
छाय बुद्धतुॅ मा छयरवसिरयस।
छाय ओ'बुर लाऽगिथ खऽच़आस्मानस,
ज़ानमिलुॅनाव भगवानस सूत्य।।

O you enlightened one,
Recognize the vital air and attain *gnosis*
To realize God;
Real worship is performed
In life's workshop itself:
What the holy scriptures truly mean
By 'the house of idols';
Lalla achieved the fusion
Of her vital air and ether,
And thus realized God;
Sodabhai (on the other hand) got-lachrymose,
What would he ask of the stone image?
Lalla dropped the pitcher of water
Inside the house of idols
And attained God-realization;
Intoxicated (as a mystic) she contrived
To bathe at the confluence of 'sixteen rivers',
Ad she built a 'bridge'
Across the ocean of temporal existence;
She knocked off the Devil's head
And gained self-recognition;
The 'unskilled carpenter',
Having built the palace in wilderness,
Learnt a lesson from Lalla!
She had to bear with the stone
Her mother-in-law kept concealed
In the plate of rice served to her
(She stood to gain from this austerity);
Lalla went to Nunda Rishi's
To teach him her doctrine –
What the *rinda* mystics call gnosis (Irfaan);
She played 'hide and seek' with Shah Hamdan
And had a direct 'encounter' with God;
O, you learned Shams,
The sun does not have a shadow;
Lalla ascended to heaven like a cloud,
Realize God (as she did).
(Translation *mine*)

The poem is, in fact, Shams Faqir's extended tribute to the spiritual qualities and attainments of the celebrated poet-mystic. Aware of her religious background and her upbringing in a Saivite Kashmiri Pandit family, Shams Faqir uses conspicuous Kashmiri words of Sanskrit origin, derived from the Hindu scriptures, while paying his poetic homage to the noted 14th century saint-poet. The words include terms such as *praan* (vital air), *jnaan* (knowledge), *aakaash* (ether), *karma vaan* (meaning 'life's workshop' in the poem; it generally means 'a performer of good actions' or 'a fortunate person having performed good actions in his or her past life'). Shams Faqir is categorical in duly recognizing Lalla's religious background and faith; he acknowledges her individual genius as a spiritual Master and her 'ascent' to the highest Abode.

On the basis of the internal evidence from the *vaakhs,* the thoughtful reader is left in no doubt about Lalla's spiritual moorings as a yogini : her Saivite upbringing in a Kashmiri Brahman family. We have unmistakable clues in some of Lalla's *vaakhs* about her initiation into yoga at the hands of her Guru, 'स्यदुँमोल' (Sedamol), who was an accomplished *Siddha* as a follower of the Saivite path. The very first *vaakh* (from among many *vaakhs*) in which Lalla talks of her initiation into spirituality and of the remarkable effect of the *Guru mantra* on her, convinces us that she immediately experienced "illumination of the Self". She had no reason to roam any more in search of a spiritual guide:

ग्वरन वो'ननम कुनुय वचुन,
न्यबुॅरूँदो'पनम अंदर अचन।
सुय गव ललि वाखतुॅ वचुन,
तवय हयोतमय नगंय नचुन।।

The Guru gave me but one precept,
"From without turn inward",
It came to me "Lalla" as God's word;
It started roaming nude.

The *vaakh* explicitly conveys that Lala experienced instant spiritual transformation and was thrown into a state of ecstasy on receiving the Guru's word. Elsewhere she says "वुछुम पऽडिंतपनुॅनि गरे" (I found the all-knowing Self within–in the sanctuary of my own heart), "वुछिम शिवतुॅशक्तीमीलिथ"

"I saw Siva and Sakti conjoined in eternal embrance" and "तवय वाऽचुॅस प्रकाशस्थान" (That's how I attained the abode of Light)". A tone of confidence and self–assurance, based on a sense of spiritual fulfilment and an awareness of the ultimate Truth, is clearly reflected in these utterances of Lal Ded. We are convinced that she has got to the root of the matter and attained self-realization. Her affirmative statements, such as those quoted, confirm her Hindu faith throughout (call it Saivite if you see it as a distinct cult within *Sanatan Dharma*). The fact is that she had no reason to seek further direction or spiritual succour from any visiting divines or preachers belonging to a faith other than her own. All the so-called evidence given by the Muslim scholar to prove her conversion to Islam is nothing but an unacceptable tissue of lies.

I should like to mention a few scholars from our own community who have made some observations on Lalla that don't seem tenable. They seem to have supposed or imagined that she played the role of a committed social activist, a professional preacher or teacher of spiritual values and brought about fusion of diverse creeds and schools of thought. Forgetting that Lal Ded didn't compose her *vaakhs* as professional poets compose and publish their verses today, they draw their own inferences on which they base very facile and untenable views as if Lalla meant to preach and propagate a philosophy of her own through her *vaakhs*. Here are the two examples that Professor Jayalal Kaul has questioned in chapter 5 of his book on *Lal Ded* :

i) She brought about a "synthesis of the two philosophies" (The Trika and Islamic Sufism) and this synthesis "was given to the world in poetic sermons by the Wandering ministrel through the rest of her life (See *Daughters of Vitasta* by Prem Nath Bazaz, Pamposh Publications, New Delhi, 1959, p.129).

ii) "The order she founded was an admixture of the non-dualistic philosophy of Saivism and Islamic Sufism" (See *A History of Kashmir* by P.N.K. Bamzai, Metropolitan Delhi, 1962, 498.

Again, in the view of Daya Kishen Kachru "Lalleshwari took the best of Islamic thought and fused it best with her own creed". (See Daya Kishan Kachru, "The Light of the Valley" *KOSHUR SAMACHAR*, 1971 (Lal Ded Number), p.7). This is also questionable, especially the way it is worded.

Lalla's *vaakhs* convey a message of peace and harmony and one can see that she owes it as much to her educational background in a Saivite Kashmiri Brahman

family as to her spiritual enlightenment based on her own *sadhana.* There is a definite impress of the Saivite thought and terminology on her *vaakhs.* Whatever her background, there is also evidence in the *vaakhs* of a state of awareness and of an outlook for transcending cults. Her teaching is, in fact, in tune with our *Sanatan Dharma* that is exceptionally catholic and all-embracing, acceptable as much to the emancipated Hindu as it should be to the liberal Muslim. It is her direct "encounter" with the ultimate Truth as a true yogini or mystic that explains why Lalla *vaakh* appeals to men of all shades of religious thought (in-as-much as all religious paths lead to the same goal). When scholars read her *vaakhs* with pre-conceived notions, they interpret them to convey that Lalla aimed at achieving a fusion or synthesis of Vedantic Philosophy and Islamic Sufism, as if with a conscious purpose (reflective of her outlook as a thinker and intellectual).

Professor Jayalal Kaul has been consistent in his description of Lal Ded as a Saivite yogini. In this connection, he has been at pains to clarify in what ways *Trika* and *Vedanta* are distinguishable as non-dualistic philosophies. In particular, he characterizes *Shankara Vedanta* as illusionist and praises the Saivite philosophy of Kashmir for its view of the world as Real. As a student of the *Gita* and on the basis of my reading of some of the Upanishads (in English translation), I don't find *Vedanta* altogether distinct from *Trika.* Both philosophies are rooted in the *vedas* and are complementary to each other. If according to *Trika* the world is Real, a manifestation of the *Swarupa*, doesn't Lord Krishna affirm the same truth in the Gita?

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान मां प्रपद्येत,
वासुदेव: सर्वमिति स महात्मा अति दुर्लभ:।।

Sloka 19, Chap 7

At the end of many births (of striving), the knowing one makes Me his refuge, realizing that Vasudeva is All. A great soul of that type is rare to find.

So we see, the Lord tells us in the Gita, "वासुदेव: सर्वमिति" (All is Vasudeva), implying that God inheres in what we see as the external world, which is as such Real – a manifestation of God. This is what *Trika* also emphasizes. In the *Sivastotravali,* Utpaldeva – celebrated Kashmir Saivite philosopher and poet – gives equal importance to seeing Siva as विश्वमय (immanent in the world) as well as विश्वोतीर्ण (transcendent or beyond the phenomenal world). As a devotee of Siva, he wants to have शिवाभासा (consciousness of the Supreme Self) in the wakeful state - while experiencing the world through the senses, and not merely when he is absorbed in meditation. If there were no compatibility between Saivism and Vedanta, Abhinav Gupta (famous Kashmiri Saivite philosopher after Utpaldeva), would not have attempted an interpretation of the *Gita* in terms of the *Trika* philosophy.

A word about Sankaracharya, who is branded an illusionist by some Saivites. We must not forget that he is also credited with being the author of the Sanskrit work titled *Saundarya Lahri.* What is *Mayavad* for *Vedantin* assumes the form of *Shaktivad* in the book mentioned, as Shankar's point of view undergoes a change. In a Sanskrit poem attributed to him, he uses the line "चिदानंद रूप: शिवोहं शिवोहं" as the refrain – a statement that a Saivite believes to be

very true of the Self. I feel that the Lal Ded scholar must avoid seeing the saint-poet as an exponent of only a particular school of thought – *Trika*. So long as Lalla is a poet (and she is so pre-eminently), she cannot afford to be rigorously doctrinal as a systematic philosopher. No doubt, many of her *vaakhs* have the preacher's tone. She is a seeker too in a number of *vaakhs;* her poetry is mystical as the poetry of aspiration as well as of fulfilment. If we over-stress Lalla's being a Saivite poet, we then overlook her catholocity. In one of her *vaakhs* she says clearly that she sees *Siva* as no different from *Kesava*. How true she sounds when she says "अभ्यासुॅके गनिरय शास्तुॅर मऽठम" (I forgot the *sastras* as my spiritual practice gained in depth and intensity). And as Lalla's practice advanced, as she went up the ladder of meditation and crossed all the hurdles – negotiated the *cakras*, her utterances became spontaneous as mystical outpourings, coming straight from the heart. What interestingly cannot escape our attention is that even when she has the preacher's tone in some of her *vaakhs*, she is not overtly didactic; we don't see a "palpable" design in the whole body of her verse-sayings. That explains why her poetry is soul-stirring.

Finally, it is the *vaakhs* of Lal Ded – that are aphoristic and, as such, loaded with wisdom – on which her great popularity as a mystical poet largely rests. And she is a great poet precisely because she is intensely spiritual and, conversely, she is highly spiritual because she is gifted with an extra-ordinary poetic sensibility. The *vaakhs* bear testimony to Lalla's genius as a saint and poet in one. What the American literary critic, Helen C. White, remarks about the mystic poet is unreservedly applicable to Lal Ded as a poet :

It is not a strange hybrid of poet and mystic who writes a mystical poem. It is not a man who writes first as a mystic and then as a poet. It is not even a mystic who turns over to the poet who happens to dwell within the same brain and body the materials of his insight to be made into a work of art by the competent craftsman. It is rather that the same human being is at once poet and mystic, at one and the same time from the beginning of the process to the end. [*The Metaphysical Poets : A study in Religious Experience* (1936; rpt. New Report, p.22)]

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Mystics and Society

Dr. Manmohan K. Magazine

In popular imagination a mystic is supposed to be a sort of a supernatural being wielding paranormal powers. And, mystics keep appearing on this globe leaving indelible imprints on popular psyche, folk lore, and even on the pages of history. Mysticism admits of no geographic boundaries; and does not recognise any distinction of religion, caste, age or sex-therefore, theoretically, any one, anywhere and at any time can be a mystic (extra-terrestrial life being as yet unknown).

Common experience points to the fact that nature has bestowed every human being with an inbuilt potential, though in varying degrees, to flower out into a mystic through appropriate spiritual exercises or due to the grace of a master mystic (Guru). However, some people are born naturally endowed with evolved mystic powers – their phycho-physical set up appears to be surcharged with a strange energy. Even in everyday-life a keen observer cannot miss the tell-tale signs of something super-normal existing in all of us – e.g., some of our dreams seem to be pregnant with uncanny messages for us or for a larger section of society. It seems as though some sort of subtle carrier waves already traversing the ambient space, are caught by our psychic antennae tuned to the astral wavelengths – thus, we stand informed or/and warned. This circumstance stresses an underlying principle of existence, namely, spirit and matter are only the two aspects of one organic whole, one basic entity.

Be as it may, every man and women, whatever their station in life (an emperor down to a humble labourer), finds sometimes or the other helplessly engulfed by vexations situations that life is in the habit of weaving around its creatures. It is then people try to run to mystics for succour and sustenance, while all material and

religious prescriptions do not help – and, this is how mysticism is acknowledged as a phenomenon that can never be ignored, though the march of historical events seems to stand outside the ken of mystic intervention. Moreover, mystics are in a position to infuse spiritual energy into a deserving aspirant, seeker of spiritual progress.

A part from finding solutions to personal problems, society in general derives a tremendous, though intangible, benefit from the very presence of a true saint (mystic). A supplicant, without exhortations from any quarter, strives to be pure in thought and deed before approaching the holy personage; otherwise a reprimand is sure to be handed down from the saint. Therefore, saints contribute to building up a robust value-system in the surrounding social fabric. Truth, honesty, sincerity, hard work, contentment (in broader connotation) and compassion begin taking roots in the minds of people – and, they in turn enkindle other minds. In fact, in present difficult times for Pandits (if they consider the present moments our testing times), especially in the backdrop of having fled Kashmir, the relevance of an abiding value-system for all young and old to hitch the wagon to, cannot be over emphasised. Our brave and wise ancestors survived all on slaughts adhering to a vibrant and potent fund of spiritual and moral traditions. Our community, already short on numbers and encircled by antagonistic socio-political matrix in its native land, needs equip itself with fearlessness (which is to be distinguished from obstinate, foolish, and over-selfish response to situations). Abhaya is the seed for all other virtues ad values to bloom forth in our younger people who are the hope, may, the very future of this beleaguered community. It is, as an example only a recent history Mahatma Gandhi made this erstwhile down trodden nation face the mightiest empire empty handed with this eternally potent mantra. It is, indeed, a mystic power that impregnates one with a spirit of self-sacrifice in the service of one's near and dear ones, as well as in the promotion of community and national goals. It purifies our intellect to the point where one discerns no conflict between individual and community objectives, while acting in the best interests of the latter. For a devotee of Shiva, as every Pandit claims to be, giving and not coveting, is the sine qua non of his/her life.

If we choose to remain ever degenerated to a mental level where from we only beg and work for our self aggrandisement to the detriment and neglect of community goals, what use is our performing havans and erecting memorials and mandirs? Saints, never teach us to be all too self-centred; and if we aspire for their blessings we must deserve to be the receptacles: then alone can we boast of being their descendants. Hard and consistent work is called for to establish mechanism to fire the imagination of young persons. The mainstream of their thought process has to derive power from the life of Shri Bhatt (15th century A.D.) who preferred community good (and even personal danger/disgrace) to his own good that was licking his feet. Our Rishis of yore would pray in their Ashrams for the purification of their intellect – the first step towards the achievement of all the higher goals of life; this sentiment is enshrined in the holy

Gayatri Mantra:
ॐ भू र्भुवः स्वः। त्तर्सावितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि, धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्।।

Moreover, the main burden of their prayer was asking for collective good :
ॐ सह नाववतु, सह नौ भुन्क्तु, सह वीर्यं करवावहै, ते जस्विनावधी तमस्तु, मा विद्धिषावहै, ॐ शान्तिः ।।3।।

(O God! Protect and bring us up together – Guru and Shishya; and bestow on both of us strength! Let our knowledge that we have gathered together be light unto all; and make us free from ill-feelings towards each other!)

Our community is full of promise, we all know; but we have to come out of our psychic cocoons to unravel a silken thread would get woven into the warp and woof of our collective, brilliant life – therein alone lies our salvation. Shall we rise to the occasion?

■

Layman's Path To Enlightenment

Manohar Trakru

In the present age of so much enlightenment and knowledge, human beings have the benefit of several highly respected religions for the fulfilment of their spiritual requirements. Some of them are what may be roughly termed as "revealed religions," like Islam and Christianity, where a "messenger of God" lays down for the people a code for righteous living. There are others, like Hinduism and Buddhism, evolved out of man's own thinking in his perpetual quest for knowing the truth about the mystery of life. Each kind of religion has its votaries and each, in its own way, has a certain profundity and depth. But even the existence of so many religions, along with so many different strands of philosophy and other branches of knowledge, has not quenched human thirst to know all the answers. The result is that everyone gifted by God with any degree of *vivek* craves passionately to fathom the reality about his existence. Unfortunately, however, it is given only to very few to succeed in this because one can get at the all important but elusive truth only by following a hard spiritual path which is extremely arduous. It is also not only long but highly demanding and intricate as well and so not everyone can take it.

As a possible solution, many religions have tried to simplify and smoothen this difficult path and devised ways to ease it. Like our own Bhakti Marg, the way of devotion, involving complete and unquestioning surrender to the Creator. They enjoin upon the seekers to simply follow the route trodden by the wise, by those who have found, or nearly found, the answers we are all seeking. Like a student taking the word of the author of a text book that the earth is round rather than venturing out to find for himself whether this is actually so.

The essence of wisdom is to learn from others, especially from their achievements

and mistakes. In the present context, ordinary folk are exhorted to emulate a deeply religious person and benefit from his experience.

But who is a religious person? Some thinkers have argued that one good way is to go to the ancient connotation of the word 'religion' and proceed from there. In olden times, religion was taken to mean, first, to get back to the most basic things, and second, to bind or tie together. So, the religious person could be described as one who is constantly returning to what is most fundamental in life, and who is then binding or joining his life to it. Sounds rather over simplistic and the idea may not appeal to all of us, certainly not to the erudite and the learned ones, especially those who have made some progress along the spiritual path. But here we are not talking about fast hares but slow tortoise. After all, don't the dull and the less bright, which means most of us, have a right to at least a ray of light? For us even a simple route, however well illumined, can turn out to be quite tough! Hence the need for an extremely simple, easy, path.

A simple solution that has been suggested is for man to adopt what is basic in life and shun the superfluous. In this context, there can be nothing more basic than God. We could say, then, that the religious person, worthy of emulation, is one who has chosen not to seek things of secondary importance in life; one who refuses to let life become cluttered with plans, pomp and possessions or activities that really don't matter. He prefers instead a simple and unencumbered life, focused on God and things of God. The second definition is also important. A person has to *bind* himself/herself to this kind of life with determination. Otherwise it won't just happen.

In our ordinary lives we seem to be swayed as much by the mystery of life as by the mystery of sin. We are inclined to seek the ephemeral, focus our main attention on passing curiosities and love things that cannot love us nor can bring us happiness. As a result, we will never be "religious" unless we develop the discrimination to see that what glitters is not necessarily divine nor is it conducive to our life as God willed us to live it. We have to learn to deliberately throw out the trash from our lives and bind ourselves only to what is most important.

This, however, is not easy to do for most of us. In order to throw away useless clutter from one's life, there has to be a fundamental decision, an assent of the mind, a movement of the will, a surrender of the heart, and a consecration of the whole of one's life. This is achieved by very few. Such religious, or consecrated, men and women who succeed in doing so are persons who solemnly pledge themselves to live life at its most basic level, that is, to live life focussed on God and the works of God. Such a life bears the imprint of a divine vocation manifested in dedication to God, who is loved above all things. And it is only such religious persons who can set the spiritual pace for the rest of the community.

India, especially Kashmir, has been fortunate in having had numerous such sages who fit this description. In fact most Kashmiris–not only Pandits but even Mulslims–very closely approximated to this ideal. They lived simply and frugally in

the mountainous fastness of the valley, in comparative penury by today's standards, but enjoyed a much higher quantum of overall happiness and peace of mind. Most of them did not have vast possessions but were closer to the divine. Can anyone deny that they were much more at peace with themselves than they are now? That they were much more God-fearing in their day to day lives? Did any Kashmiri suffer the level of stress, and all that results from it, that practically all of them suffer now? In Christianity the kind of life we used to live in Kashmir is venerated as a life devoted to the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They believe that these vows leaves a person free to pursue perfect charity, and stand as brilliant beacons of light pointing to enlightenment and self-realisation. But for Kashmiri sages and spiritualists, in fact even for most *ordinary* Kashmiri Pandits, this kind of life would be old hat. We produced countless enlightened souls who lived simple lives in poverty and piety, serving what to them were God's commands.

They didn't make a show of it. As a result, most of them have remained unknown and unsung. But they radiated a lustre that brought light quietly to vast numbers of lay people who chose to follow their teachings with sincerity. This is borne out by the fact of ever increasing numbers of devotees of Bhagavaan Gopinathji whose Ashrams have emerged like magnets for those puzzled as much by life's miseries and woes as by its mysteries, and are looking for simple, practicable, solutions.

The need for such persons has never been greater than in today's world in which one finds so much emphasis on greed, comfort, enjoyment and material things along with avoidance of any kind of sacrifice and responsibility. Such a world tends to distract man from God. It's often of secondary importance to basic human life and happiness. In fact, it's at times directly against human life and happiness, and only leads to misery.

For a practical illustration of this truth, one has only to look at the misery most of us are suffering. One cannot discount the political causes for our community's plight, but these factors alone cannot be blamed for all our woes. We pride ourselves at being an intelligent community but look at the most stupid and inane social customs that the "most intelligent" Kashmiri pandits have acquired. Not only are these evils assiduously nurtured but newer and newer ones are added to them even at the present juncture of our history when we, as a community, are so much distraught by our political fate. At a time when our continued existence as a homogenous group is in serious jeopardy, we squander our resources on unprecedented ostentatiousness, merely in the expectation of a pat on the back from our equally ignorant friends and relatives. In the process we only generate resentment and envy. Even those who partake of our lavish parties don't thank us. Many who gorge on a whole plateful of meat at a KP's wedding party denigrate him privately saying that the host is "bursting with wealth". And the hosts, more likely than not, spend a life-time's savings on the bash!

It may sound harsh to say so but the fact remains that those determined to follow a hedonistic life style cannot even hope to live happily and enjoy mental peace, leave alone following a spiritual path. That path

is entirely beyond them and the question of progressing along it just does not arise. Luxury with greed and ostentatiousness can never be harmonised with the simplicity of soul or love of God, which is one of the basic teachings of Bhagavaanji. The two just don't go together. It is all right to come to Bhagavaan Ji's Ashrams and sing his praise; but is it all right to then promptly forget, or ignore, what he taught? It might be a lot beneficial to all of us if we followed at least some of his teachings even if we are unable to sing Bhajans in his praise. If we could inculcate a modicum of discipline in ourselves. Only Bhagavaan knows when our community will learn to behave and act in a mature fashion, be helpful to each other and start throwing out the trash that governs our lives. Only he knows when we will really grow up. For the present, it seems doubtful whether we are worthy enough to walk along the path charted out by him for the common folk. Which is a pity, because that path could turn out to be the easiest way to enlightenment for the ordinary ones among us! ■

Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji (A World Teacher)

A.K. Parimoo

Just more than a hundred years back in the House of Pt. Narayan joo Bhan at Srinagar (Kmr) a baby saw the light of the day. Little did his parents know that the baby in the days to come will shine like a Sun to illuminate the whole world. Little could they understand that the bud in the cradle is to grow in a Global tree to shower Nectar of grace, shade of peace and the fruit of contentment. The baby was none other than BHAGAVAAN GOPINATHJI a sage immutable, immortal, with all the attributes of Shiva with powers enormous to heal the wounds of humanity on an Universal plane. A compassionate Global Father with infinite love and care for his aspirants. Although the adorable Guru shunned press and Publicity but he knew it for certain that his message would rise like a restless flood inundating by its own force the banks of human minds. His sayings are few, being an introvert but once he occupies the mind of an aspirant he makes him knowledgeable and pours his grace more than his expectations, removes all his doubts and delusions and gradually attracts him on the path of renunciation and service to mankind. Though the great master has given up his mortal shackles three decades back yet he is eager and zealous from the astral plane to bring the world on the tracks of divinity, morality, universal brother hood and spirituality, which is otherwise *eclipsed with* material lust, hypocrisy, and selfish motives.

During his life-time Bhagavaan Ji took upon himself serious physical and mental Tapasya and deep Sadhna. Unawares of bodily needs, and comforts till he got full mastery over his senses achieving a full stability of mind. During this hard concentration he developed enormous

spiritual powers, which he used gradually to eliminate sufferings of mankind. For masters like Bhagavaanji who are capable of violating laws of nature, all the Deities are at their beck and call. They believe in service of mankind from the Astral planes, but we should not forget the Holiest things in life are not exhibited abroad in public. The sure instinct of the human soul is to keep them withdrawn in the innermost recesses accessible to a few and in case of Bhagavaanji to none. Certainly these secrets of Sadhna are revealed only to those who whole heartedly care for spiritual things. This is the reason nobody has known the Real Bhagavaan Ji. He is known superficially to people mostly because of his miracles.

Today the compassionate Father realizes the need to pass his message equally in the west and east that is why lacs of people all over the world are gradually coming under his fold, and it is for this reason that He is called JAGAT GURU or WORLD TEACHER.

Though Kashmir from the hoary past has been an abode of saints, and sages, Bhagavaanji is the only Saint who is deeply effective on Indian masses and the world as well. The devotees have established his centres in Australia, America, Canada and England with more and more centres coming up. The recent proclamation by the *Mayor of New Jersey* is a strong verdict who proclaimed Bhagavaan Ji as the world teacher an instrument to bring world back on the rails of peace and tranquillity. We have numberless instances to justify that the adorable Saint is keen to spread and implement his message to restore to the humanity peace and universal brotherhood.

Before I move my pen to write on the philosophy of Bhagavaanji I beg an excuse from the esteemed readers to forgive me for any error or omission. Regarding the introvert nature of the Holy master, it is a common axiom that a real Guru initiates an aspirant either by looks or by touch or by silence. Bhagavaanji believed in initiating his aspirants by silence and looks. His spiritual eye was open to study past present and future, with a tremendous thought reading power, just a look and he would utter the problem of the aspirant with all the remedial measures in a minimum time period. The desperate aspirant while sitting before the Revered Guru would feel relaxed and comfortable and just in a few days his insoluble sorrow would turn into joy. This kind of communicative medium is far stronger than/sonorous recitation of multiple words. The Divine spark is to be felt within and is too much effective in the long run. Guru like Bhagavaanji gives a hint in a few words and it is for the flock of aspirants to understand it, interpret it, and to make it known to others. Philip Simfendorfer an Australian devotee of Bhagavaanji said, He simply sits in my mind and washes all my doubts and delusions without a word. This type of convincing an aspirant is called thought transference. It is usually practised by Bhagavaanji while materializing in different parts of world before deserving aspirants who are on the arduous path of spirituality to achieve an everlasting smooth and sweet end.

Personal Experience

My son is an Electronic Engineer working in Delhi, I had floated his Tekni for marriage. A gentleman from Delhi

approached my house with a proposal of marriage for his daughter with my Son with the plea that the Tekni matches well. He further said that I have a big plot of land adjacent to Delhi which I will give you if the proposal is implemented. The plot of land tempted my material self and after seeking permission of Bhagavaanji, I left for Delhi to know the consent of my son. To my grief and astonishment my son refused blankly. After a long persuasion he reluctantly agreed. During the night on the same day I saw myself climbing the stairs of Holy Chakershwar (HariParbat) and Bhagavaanji in light blue Phiran and white Turban descending the stairs. Every expression of his Divine face revealed anger with red eyes as if showering fire. I bowed down in reverence and he pointed with his hands towards the left side with these words. Two sq. meters of land here is sufficient for you Sir, I said it is too less what shall I do with two sq. meters. No reply and my eyes opened. Thinking deep on the dream sequence I analysed that Two sq. meters is almost 6'x4' size of land sufficient for burial or cremation of a person particularly when I am approaching the evening of my life. Bhagavaanji's two words were a sufficient hint that you have been haunted by greed for a plot of land against the wishes of your Son. I took it for certain the Holy master is not willing for the alliance, the same day I passed on my refusal to the concerned Gentleman.

The attitude of Bhagavaanji was in line with dictum of Tantra and Shaivism. Shavism is unconcerned for the body the prime concern being the soul which is unaffected with whatever we eat. This is the reason Bhagavaanji would gulp down whatever was offered to him his attention being always in contact with the super-soul unawares of what was offered to him, at times he would starve for months despite persuasion by his sister and devotees. In Shaivism Shiva represents the passive self luminous and all pervading Entity while Shakti is the active force in whatever is manifest and what is not manifest. Shiva remains uncontaminated. He is the formless. It is to say unity of twin subject and object. Shakti in active state is the symbol of whole creation with multiple forms and colours. Shiva is the cosmic consciousness and Shakti is the cosmic principle. She is effect and Shiva is the cause. As we cannot separate cause and effect so cannot we separate Shiva and Shakti. Shakti therefore is Maya when released by Shiva to activise his forms which seem a great multiplicity out of inherent and eternal unity. Bhagavaanji observed penance initially at Sharika shrine a great site of energy to reach subliminal heights. In addition to Hari-Parbat he often visited other Shakti sites like Jwala ji, Badrakali and Khirbhawani a most powerful Shakti sthall. This very attitude of Bhagavaanji confirms his belief in Shakti cult the essence of Kashmir Shavisim. Shaivism or Tantra does not discriminate. The weights to measure the merit of an aspirant is his intensity of devotion irrespective of caste and creed. I cannot help to recall the Divine words of Bhagavaanji connecting the above lines.

Hindu chah Aakh Ta Musalman Chu Byakh.

Meaning Hindus and Muslims are alike. Regarding Bhagavaanji's Miracles, a miracle commonly can be defined as a phenomenon which breaks a natural law or

goes beyond a natural law for example a dead man is brought to life by a yogi. The Yogi has thus broken a natural law by enhancing his life span. Great masters like Bhagavaanji who achieve Shiva hood perform miracles even after giving up the body. Bhagavaanji has a large and difficult spiritual mission to execute for the welfare of the mankind. He applies all his divine powers to treat a fatal disease or solve insoluble human problems. His miracles are numerous a few hundred have come to surface and more and more are pouring in. MAYA diverts a person from sprit to matter and from the real to unreal. Bhagavaanji's mission is to balance sprit and matter. The key is with us only we have to exert to develop an equilibrium of spirit and matter.

जपमाला से (संस्कृत)

Dr. Chaman Lal Raina

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अकाराय नमो नम:।।

Bemy obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is AKARA! himself. अकार: is the immutable word of the Vedas. It is the primal sound created by Shiva, through the Damru, during His Tandava dance. अ-Ais the seed-sound syllable of the Shakti tradition. अ is the manifested Brahma, who is commissioned in creating the world of animate and inanimate beings. अ is the first phoneme of Pranava ओ३म AUM/OM. अ resides in the heart region and is the vibration of the universal harmony.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अतिदीप्ताय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ATI-DIPTA! अतिदीप्त: is the super-effulgence of a Sadhaka, who is merged with the Absolute. He is the embodiment of all radiance and expresses himself through Prakash-the eternal light. This is the stage of higher aspiration, where the seeker gets united with the Supreme power and becomes an integrated part of the whole, through Yoga.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अचिन्त्याय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ACHINTYA! अचिन्तय : is the state beyond thought. Thought vanishes, when a Yogi is fully merged with the Absolute. It is the inexpressible state of mind, where the embodied soul is experiencing the bliss of supernal Truth. It is the highest stage where the throughts or Ichha Shakti also disappears.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अतुल्याय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ATULYA! अतुल्य: There cannot be any comparison, when the Yogic embodiment is considered as the base of the spritual effulgence. All the facets of body, mind and spirit are unified into one subtle manifestation of Soham-He am I. Lord can not be measured, as He is the source of unity.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अमिताभाय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is AMITABHA! अमिताभ :

is the infinite effulgence, radiated through the solar, lunar and igneous constituents of the cosmos. All the deities find their orgin in Amitabh, as the Divinity is the source of eternal light. 'Prakash'–Light and 'Vimarsha' aspect of Reality is known to the seeker, who is always meditating upon the Divinity, in which he experiences the brilliance of infinite suns.

ॐ नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अघोराय नमो नमः॥

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is AGHORA! अघोर : is one of the attributes of Lord Shiva. It is that highest state of mind of a Sadhaka, which reflects the equipoise of body, mind and soul. Aghora feels no discrimination between अहं and इदम or I-consciousness and this-that consciousness. Aghora is bijamantra–the seed syllable of Bahu-roopa-garbha of the Shaiva tradition. Aghora is verily the Hiranya-garbha or cosmic seed. It is the superstage of the Shiva cult.

ॐ नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अनिन्दिताय नमो नमः॥

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ANINDITA! अनिन्दित : is beyond any imposition. It is the unstained life, which is filled with the fragrance of love, compassion and equality. A Yogi is concerned with the knowledge of Self, he is beyond the physical limitations. He perceives 'Atman' in every Jiva–the embodied soul, hence he does not see any duality. This state of Sadhana gets revibrated and the Yogi is said to be beyond 'Name and form'. निन्दा is imposition and अनिन्दा is the transcendence beyond any limitation.

ॐ नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अव्यक्ताय नमो नमः॥

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is AVYKTA! अव्यक्त : is Eternal. It cannot be expressed in words, deeds or mental states. It is the state beyond any manifestation. It transcends 'Sattva–rajas–tamas', which are the basic causes of Prakriti or primordial nature. This realization which is inherent in him. It is not the body, but Adheya or Soul. This is attainable, through the grace of Sad-guru.

ॐ नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अवधूताय नमो नमः॥

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is AVADHOOTA himself अवधूत : is the higher state of consciousness. He observes undifferentiated self in the Jivatma or embodied soul. He has no liking for any kind of touch, taste, smell etc., which are the 'gunas'–qualities of the sensory organs. He transcends the psycho physical sheath, but remains ever absorbed in trance, which leads him to perfection. Avadhoota is least concerned about the world around him, and men rarely fathom his spiritual depth.

ॐ नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, आधिहराय नमो नमः॥

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ADHIHARA himself आधिहर: is the person, who removes all the psychic ailments. Psychological imbalance destroys the equipoise of a sadhaka. So Aadhihara maintains the mental balance of the devotees. All the more inward and all the abnormal psychological experiences are called psychic and the Lord removes the psychic ailment with his mere touch.

ॐ नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, अश्रमस्थाय नमो नमः॥

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ASHRAMASTHA

himself आश्रमस्थ: stays in the four Ashramas viz., Brahmacharya–the student life involved in the study of vedas and other allied scriptures; Grihastha–the life of householder in which the sadhaka is concerned about the development of his domestic life Vanaparastha–the life not associated with the mundane life, but a preparation for higher understanding of the Supreme power and lastly the Sannyasa the life of renunciation.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, आत्मतत्वाय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ATMA-TATTVA himself आत्मतत्व: is the absolute self. It is unconditional, undifferentiated and Eternal. It is conscious existence. Self discovers that the identity of 'Jivatman' is not with the physical body, but with the Supreme spirit, who is the primal cause of creation. Self not only comprehends but posseses the macro-self in its being.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, इष्टदेवाय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is ISHTADEVA. इष्टदेव is the chosen deity. He is the inmate choice of our Sadhana. He communes with his Ishtadeva who is Brahma–Vishnu–Rudra and all the nine aspects of Shakti. Ishtadeva is the embodiment of 'Name and Form'. He is the conscious personality of the Divine, who answers to the prayers of a Sadhaka. 'Ishta' is the representative image of the Absolute power.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, कल्पवृक्षाय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is KALPAVRIKSHA. कल्पवृक्ष is the celestial tree, who is the giver of plenty. It gives all prosperity. Both the Bhoga–wordly enjoyments and Yoga–the spiritual communion with the absolute power are granted by the Kalpa-Vriksha, who is non else but the great Guru in the form of Ishta.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, कालपूजिताय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is KALA-PUJITA! कालपूजित is the great Guru, who is even adored by the Kala-the eternal Time and the serial time. Kala is the eternal dimension of the Supreme force. Time is infinite. It is an extension of consciousness, in which the universal phenomenon is arranged in a definite relation, succession and order. Kala is the attribute of Lord Shiva.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, खेचराय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is KHECHARA! खेचर is the deity, whose domain is the sky. It is the Akashtattva–or the principle of extension in the vast universe. A Yogi is said to be moving in every direction, to exercise his free-will. Prakriti or primordial nature in the first vibration creates a new and exceedingly fine and pervassive condition of matter called Akash or ether. Yogis vibration goes around the world and identifies himself with the 'Shabda'–sound, which is eternal etherial movement.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, गम्भीराय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is GAMBHIRA. गम्भीर is the lotus, which sprouts in the Mooladhara of a Yogi. It is the faculty of being in tune with the Absolute Divinity, which guides him to rise to the सहस्रार Sahasrara, where

the thousand petteled lotus blooms. It is the super-senseous faculty in the Sadhaka to be in the world like a lotus in the water, without being stained with the surroundings of water. An embodied soul is directed by the Yogi to live in the world, without any trace of ignorance known as Avidya.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, उोंरूपाय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is AUMROOPA. ओ३म रूप Aum is the vedic Pranava. It is the supreme Reality and the Primal vibration, which has created the law of गुण–कर्म or the causation and effect. अ–A is the creation or the Brahmi shakti, उ–Uis the sustenance or the Vaishnavi Shakti and म–M is the Raudri Shakti or dissolution. Being Pranava, all the Devas find their abode in the Supreme self through the Shabda-Brahman or AUM.

उों नमों भगवते गोपीनाथाय, गुणातीताय नमो नम:।।

Be my obeisance to Bhagavaan Gopinath, who is GUNATITA. गुणातीत is the state of transcendence, which a Yogi experiences in the Supreme state of Samadhi. The three Gunas of Sattva–Rajas and Tamas are the balancing factors for the Prakriti or Primordial nature, but the Yogi excels the Prakriti and is identical with the Absolute self, where all the inherent qualities of पुरुष–the self transcend to the higher realm of supramental consciousness.

टाठि बब (काश्मीरी)

रानी कौल

सथग्वरो छम सथ मे चाऽनी,
वथ मे असलिँच हावतम।
टाठि बब छम सथ मे चाऽनी,
वथ मे असलिँच हावतम।।
व्यापुँ कोत बो शापुँ सूँत्यन,
पाप छिम कऽर्‌यमुँत्य स्येठाह।
म्वकलावतम् शापुँ मंजुँ मे,
व्वन्य मे वति चुँय लागतम।। सथ ग्वरो....
नय कोरूम तफ, नय कोरूम ज़फ
नय सोरूम दयि नाव जाँह।
यी सोरूम नुँय वुम्ब्रि वॉञ्से,
ती मे वन्य स्वरूनावतम।। सथ ग्वरो ....
मूहुँ गटि मंज छस बुँ लऽजमुच्,
वथ नसाऽ छम कॉहँ यिवान।
करतु अथुँरोट व्वन्य में पुननुय,
पऽत्यमि गरि मो त्रवतम।। सथ ग्वरो ....
लोकुँचारस गऽयि मे गफलत,
बुजिरस यिथुँ नो डलय।
सूँत्य सूँत्य रोज़ख मे पानय,
यिनु साऽ व्वन्य मऽशरावहम।। सथ ग्वरो ....
योर जन्मस यिथ कोरूम क्याह,
नय कोरूम वपुकार कॉह।
होश हावस पूरूँ थऽविज़्यम
पनुँन्यन पादुँनुय तल थावतम।। सथ ग्वरो..
अनति समय येलि में वात्यम,
पुरू हयस थऽविज़्यम, पनुँन्य मे।
रानी छस ना दास चाऽनी
दूर ज़ाह मतु त्रावतम।। सथ ग्वरो ......

■

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प्रभु का प्रकाश
रामचरित मानस के सन्दर्भ में

राधेश्याम तिवारी

त्यक्त्वा सुदुस्त्यजसुरेप्सितराज्यलक्ष्मीं धार्मिष्ठ आर्यवचसा यदगादरण्यम्।
मायामृगं दयितयेप्सितमन्धावद् वन्दे महापुरुष ते चरणारविन्दम्।।

(हे प्रभु! आपके चरणकमलों की महिमा कौन कहे? रामावतार में अपने पिता महाराज श्री दशरथजी के वचनों से देवताओं के लिए भी वाञ्छनीय और दुस्त्यज राज्यलक्ष्मी को छोडकर आपके चरणकमल वन-वन घूमते फिरे। सचमुच आप धर्मनिष्ठता की सीमा हैं। और महापुरुष! अपनी प्रेयसी सीताजी के चाहने पर जान-बूझकर आपके चरणकमल मायामृग के पीछे दौड़ते रहे। सचमुच आप प्रेम की सीमा हैं। प्रभो। मैं आपके उन्हीं चरणारविन्दों की वन्दना करता हूँ।

(श्रीमद्भागवत-11/5/34)

आनन्दकन्द भगवान श्रीकृष्ण की दिव्य लीलाओं को शब्दात्मक अभिव्यक्ति देने वाले परमपुण्यात्मक श्रीमद्भागवत-महापुराण में उपयुक्त श्लोक भगवान शुकदेव जी के दिव्य मुखारविन्द से अनायास ही स्फुरित हो गये। भगवान श्री रामभद्र के परम मंगलमय चरित्र-जो भारतीय जनमानस में वायु की तरह समाया हुआ है-की इससे बड़ी अभिव्यक्ति नहीं हो सकती।

गोस्वामी जी द्वारा कृत श्रीरामचरितमानस पुराणपुरुषोत्तम भगवान श्रीरामचन्द्र जी दिव्य लीलाओं का एक सवश्रेष्ठ लिखित ग्रन्थ है जिसमें प्रभु के दिव्य चरित्र का साड्ोपांग समावेश किया है। कहीं प्रभु अपने दिव्य चरित्रों द्वारा भक्त ह्रदय में ईश्वरत्व का सृजन करते हैं और कहीं पर प्रभु मनुष्यरूप में सामान्य प्राणी के जीवन में आने वाली समस्याओं को एक दिव्य रूप देते हैं।

भगवान श्रीरामभद्र ने माता कौशल्या के सामने अपने दिव्य विराट स्वरूप के एक अंश को स्फुरित किया। इस प्रसंग में प्रभु ने भगवती कौशल्या के दिव्य ह्रदयपटल पर अपने ईश्वरत्व की एक अनूप छाप सौंपी।

"देखरावा मातहिं निज अद्भुत रूप अखंड।
रोम रोम प्रति लागे कोटि कोटि ब्रह्मांड।।

बालकाण्ड-दोहा नं॰20।

अगनित रवि ससि सिव चतुरानन।
बहु गिरि सरित सिंधु महि कानन।।
काल कर्म गुन ग्यान सुभाऊ।
सोउ देखा जो सुना न काऊ।।
देखी माया सब बिधि गाढ़ी।
अति सभीत जोरे कर ठाढ़ी।।
देखा जीव नचावइ जाही।
देखी भगति जो छोरइ ताहि।।
तन पुलकित मुख बचन न आवा।
नयन मूदि चरननि सिरू जावा।।
बिसमयवंत देखि महतारी।
भए बहुरि सिसुरूप खरारि।।

अस्तुति करि न जाइ भय माना।
जगत पिता मैं सुत करि जाना।।"

प्रभु ने अपने दिव्य स्वरूप का दिग्दर्शन-एक दूसरे प्रसंग में-भगवती सती के सामने तब प्रस्तुत किया, जब दक्षपुत्री ईश्वर की परीक्षा लेने के लिए उदधृत हुई थी। चन्द्रमौली भगवान श्री शंकर के दिव्य भगवत तत्व के तात्विक विवेचन की अनदेखी करते हुए सती ने ब्रह्म को मन, बुद्धि और वाणी से परखने का प्रयास किया जो सर्वथा अलौकिक, अनन्त और अपरिमेय है।

"मन समेत जेहि जात न बानी।
तरक न सकहिं सकल अनुमानी।
महिमा निगम नेति कहीं कहई।
जो तिहुँ काल एक रस रहई।।"

मर्यादा पुरूषोत्तम भगवान श्रीराम के द्वारा अपने जिस स्वरूप की सृष्टि दक्षपुत्री के समक्ष की गई, उसका शब्द चित्र यहाँ प्रस्तुत है।

"सती दीख कौतुकु मग जाता।
आगे रामु सहित श्री भ्राता।।
फिरि चितवा पाछें प्रभु देखा।
सहित बंधु सिय सुंदर बेषा।।
जहँ चितवहिं तहँ प्रभु आसीना।
सेवहिं सिद्ध मुनीस प्रबीना।।
देखे सिव बिधि बिष्नु अनेका।
अमित प्रभाउ एक तें एका।।
बंदत चरन करत प्रभु सेवा।
बिबिध वेष देखे सब देवा।।
सती बिधात्री इंदिरा देखीं अमित अनूप।
जेहिं जेहिं वेष अजादि सुर तेहि तेहि तन अनुरूप।।
देखे जहँ जहँ रघुपति जेते।
सक्तिन्ह सहित सकल सुर तेते।।
जीव चराचर जो संसारा।
देखे सकल अनेक प्रकारा।।
पूजहिं प्रभुहि देव बहु बेषा।
राम रूप दूसर नहीं देखा।।
अवलोके रघुपति बहुतेरे।
सीता सहित न वेष घनैरे।।
सोइ रघुबर सोइ लछिमनु सीता।"

(रामचरितमान-बालकाण्ड-दोहा नं. 54)

कुछ इसी प्रकार का प्रबोधन भगवान श्री हुनमानजी के द्वारा रावण की सभा में किया गया जिसमें अंजनी पुत्र ने प्रभु के दिव्य प्रकाश को शब्दाङ्कित किया।

"सुनु रावन ब्रह्मांड निकाया।
पाइ जासु बल बिरचति माया।।
जाके बल बिरंचि हरि ईसा।
पालत सृजत हरत दससीसा।।
जा बल सीस धरत सहसानन।
अंडकोस समेत गिरि कानन।।
धरइ जो विबिध देह सुरत्राता।
तुम्ह से सठन्ह सिखावनु दाता।।
हर को दंड कठिन जेहिं भंजा।
तेहि समेत नृप दल मद गंजा।।
खर दूषन त्रिसिरा अरू बाली।
बधे सकल अतुलित बलसाली।
जाके बल लवलेस तें जितेहु चराचर झारि।।"
...."

(सुन्दरकाण्ड-दोहा नं. 21)

कविकुल चूड़ामणि गोस्वामीजी ने प्रभु के वाङ्गमयी स्वरूप-रामचरितमानस-को पटापेक्ष करते हुए ईश्वर के विहंगम विराट स्वरूप को इन शब्दों में वर्णन किया:-

"रामु काम सत कोटि सुभग तन।
दुर्गा कोटि अमित अरि मर्दन।।
सक्र कोटि सत सरिस विलासा।
नभ सत कोटि अमित अवकासा।।

मरुत कोटि सत बिपुल बल रबि सत कोटि प्रकास।।
ससि सत कोटि सुसीतल समन सकल भव त्रास।।
काल कोटि सत सरिस अति दुस्तर दुर्ग दुरंत।
धूमकेतु सत कोटि सम दुराधरष भगवतं।।"
प्रभु अगाध सत कोटि पताला।
समन कोटि सत सरिस कराला।।
तीरथ अमित कोटि सम पावन।
नाम अखिल अघ पूग नसावन।।
हिमगिरी कोटि अचल रघुबीरा।
सिंधु कोटि सत सम गंभीरा।
कामधेनु सत कोटि समाना।।
सकल काम दायक भगवाना।।
सारद कोटि अमित चतुराई।
बिधि सत कोटि सृष्टि निपुनाई।।
विष्नु कोटि सम पालन कर्ता।
रूद्र कोटि सत सम संहर्ता।।
धनद कोटि सत सम धनवाना।
माया कोटि प्रपंच निधाना।।
भार धरन सत कोटि अहीसा।
निरवधि निरूपम प्रभु जगदीसा।।
छं०-निरूपम न उपमा आन राम समान रामु निगम कहै।
जिमि कोटि सत खद्योत सम रबि कहत अति लघुता लहै।।
एहि भाँति निज मति बिलास मुनीस हरिहि बखानहि।
प्रभु भाव गाहक अति कृपाल सप्रेम सुनि सुख मानही।।
दो०-रामु अमित गुन सागर थाह कि पावइ कोइ।
संतन्ह सन जस किछु सुनेऊँ तुम्हहि सुनायऊँ सोइ।।
(रामचरितमानस-उत्तराकाण्ड-दोहा नं०-91/92)

प्रभु के तात्त्विक और विराट स्वरूप की एक दिव्य अनूभूति और विवेचन मंदोदरी के द्वारा भी रावण के समक्ष प्रस्तुत किया गया जो कि साधकों के लिए एक अमूल्य चिन्तामणि और अनुपान है।

"विस्वरूप रघुबंस मनि करहु बचन विस्वासु।
लोक कल्पना बेद कर, अंग अंग प्रति जासु।।
पद पाताल सीस अज धागा। अपर लोक अँग अँग विश्रामा।।
भृकुटि बिलास भयंकर काला। नयन दिवाकर कच धन माला।।
जासु घ्रान अस्विनीकुमारा। निसि अरू दिवस निमेष अपारा।।
श्रवन दिसा दस बेद बखानी। मारूत स्वास निगम निज बानी।।
अधर लोभ जम दसन कराला। माया हास बाहु दिगपाला।।
आनन अनल अंबुपति जीहा। उतपति पालन प्रलय समीहा।।
रोम राजि अष्टादस भारा। अस्थि सैल सरिता नस जारा।।
उदर उदधि अधगो जातना। जगमय प्रभु का बहु कलपना।।
दो०- अहंकार सिव बुद्धि अज मन ससि चित्त महान।
मनुज बास सचराचर रूप राम भगवान।।
(रामचरित मानस-लंकाकाण्ड-दोहा नं० 14/15)

ऊपर लिखे गये कुछ ईश्वरीय स्वरूप के दृष्टान्त के बात अन्ततोगत्वा साधक के मनः चित्त पर एक प्रश्न बारम्बार आता है- "उस अनन्त, अपरिमित, अपरिमेय और सर्वशक्तिमान प्रभु के हमारे दैनिक जीवन में क्या उपयोगिता है?" इस प्रश्न का उत्तर गोस्वामाजी ने अपनी ललित-ललाम शैली में उत्तरकाण्ड में दिया है-

जो चेतन कहँ जड़ करइ जडहिं करइ चैतन्य।
अस समर्थ रघुनायकहि भजहिं जीवन ते धन्य।।
(रामचरितमानस-उत्तराकाण्ड-दोहा नं॰ 119ख)

मसकहि करइ बिरंचि प्रभु अजहि मसक ते हीन।
अस विचारि तजि संसय रामहि भजहिं प्रवीन।
(रामचरितमानस-उत्तराकाण्ड-दोहा नं॰ 122ख)

आनन्दकन्द प्रभु ने अरण्यकाण्ड में अपनी "कृपालुता" स्वरूप का तब दिग्दर्शन दिया जब कि प्रभु ने अपने सामने प्रस्तुत निसाचरों को-जो प्रभु से युद्ध करने के तिरस्कृत विचार से आये थे-अपना स्वरूप दिया और जन्म मृत्यु के जंजाल से भी मुक्त किया।

सुर मुनि सभय प्रभु देखि मायानाथि अति कौतुक कर्यो।
देखहिं परस्पर राम करि, संग्राम रिपुदल लरि मर्यो।।
दो॰-राम राम कहि तनु तजहि पावहिं पद निर्वान।
करि उपाय रिपु मारे छन महुँ कृपानिधान।।
(रामचरितमानस-अरण्यकाण्ड-दोहा नं॰ 20क)

कुछ ऐसे हीं प्रकाश का दिव्य वितरण राघवेन्द्र ने बनवास से लौटने के तदुपरांत अयोध्यावासियों को दिया। हर एक अयोध्यावासी प्रभु से मिलने के लिए अतिशय व्याकुल था। प्रभु ने अपने आपकों उतने ही स्वरूपों में प्रकट किया जितने अयोध्या के वे भाग्यशाली सज्जन थे और राघवेन्द्र सबसे यथोचित मिले-एक ही आत्मीयता के साथ।

प्रभु बिलोकि हरषे पुरबासी।
जनित बियोग बिपत्ति सब नासी।।
प्रेमातुर सब लोग निहारी।
कौतुक कीन्ह कृपाल खरारी।।
अमित रूप प्रगटे तेहि काला।
जथायोग मिले सबहि कृपाला।।
कृपादृष्टि रघुबीर बिलोकी।
किए सकल नर नारि बिसोकी।।
छन महि सबहि मिले भगवाना।
उमा मरम यह काहुँ न जाना।।
(उत्तरकाण्ड-दोहा नं॰ 5)

अगर साधक के मन में यह प्रश्न उठे कि प्रभु ने भक्तों के हृदय में अपने किस स्वरूप को स्थापित किया-जो कि भक्तें का एक सम्बल है-तो श्रीमदभागवत में भगवताकार श्री शुकदेव ने स्पष्ट शब्दों में एक गूढत्तम सत्य को उजागर किया -

स्मरतां हृदि विन्यस्य बिद्धं दण्डककण्टकै।
स्वपादपल्लवं राम आत्मज्योतिरगात् तत्।।
(श्रीमदभागवत-9/19/19)

(तदनन्तर अपना स्मरण करने वाले भक्तों के हृदय में अपने चरणकमल स्थापित करके, जो दण्डकवन के काँटों से बिंध गये थे, अपने स्वप्रकाश परमज्योतिमय धाम में चले गये।)

इस सम्बन्ध में यह ध्यान दिलाना अति आवश्यक होगा कि रामचरितमानस में कहीं भी भगवती श्री सीताजी और भगवान श्री लक्ष्मण जी-जो भगवान के साथ वन में गये थे-के चरणों में काँटे का उल्लेख नहीं है। इस प्रश्न के उत्तर में यहीं कहा जा सकता है कि प्रभु की वनयात्रा में राघवेन्द्र सबसे आगे चल रहे थे और भगवती और श्री लक्ष्मण जी एक साध क की भाँति प्रभु का अनुगमन कर रहे थे। इसी की फलश्रुति यह रही कि बनयात्रा के मार्ग पर प्रभु विपत्तियों का विष पीते रहे और अपने अनुगमन करने वाले भक्तों के मार्ग को कटंकविहिन करते गये।)

इस श्रृंखला के आगे लिखे जाने वाले लेखों में प्रभु के दिव्य स्वरूप और प्रकाश-भारतीय वाङ्गमय के परिपेक्ष्य में-चर्चा की जाएगी।

Love–A pathway to God Realization

Radhey Shyam Tiwari

All that is objective is illusory, of the nature of a dream just as on waking from a dream no dream is left of the dream-domain, the phenomenal has an absolute non-existence even more certain than that. In the eyes of him who has woken from a dream, the dream-world continues to persist in a conceptual form, or in the other words, it continues to exist as a mere concept. But to a striver moving ahead towards God-consciousness, the world ceases to exist even as a concept. Both SRIMADBHAGVADGITA and SHRI RAMCHARITMANAS underline the above-mentioned theme–

– या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुने:।। 2/69

– मोहनिशाँ समु सोवनिहारा।
देखिअ सपन अनेक प्रकारा।।
एहिं जग जामिनि जागहिं जोगी।
परमारथी प्रपंच बियोगी।
जनिअ तबहिं जीव जग जागा।
जब सब विषय बिलास विरागा।
होइ बिवेकु मोह भ्रम भागा।
तब रघुनाथ चरन अनुरागा।
(अयोध्याकाण्ड-दोहा नं॰ 12/13)

Sacred Books dealing with the theme of Hindu Mythology are abound with instances and quotation where viewing the Chief Executive in all shops and forms has been established as a fundamental approach- route towards God. Even Lord has given vent to his articulation in a crystal clear manner–

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते।
वासुदेव: सर्वमति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभ:।।(VII/19)

"In the very last of all births, the man of realization worships Me, realizing that all this is God Such a Great Soul is very rare."

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि।
शुनि चैवश्वपाके च पण्डिता: समदर्शिन:।।(V/18)

"The wise look with the same eye on a Brahman endowed with learning and culture, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a pariah too."

मत्र: परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय।
मयि सर्वमिंद प्रोंत सूत्रे मणिगणा इव।।7।।(VII/7)

"Oh Arjuna, There is nothing else besides Me. Like clusters of Yarn-beads formed by knots on a thread, all this is threaded on Me"

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्व च मयि पश्यति।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति।।7।।
(VI/30)

"He who seens Me (The Universal Self) present in all beings and sees all beings existing with Me, never loses sight of Me, nor do I lose sight of him"

GOSWAMI TULSIDAS–While initiating his momumental work "RAMCHARITMANAS" didnot lag

behind is offring his obeisame to wicked, pariahs and cruel human beings as outline below:

"बदऊँ संत असज्जन चरना।
दुखप्रद उभय बीच कछु बरना।।"
"बहुरि बंदि खल गन सतिभाएँ।
जे बिनु काज दाहिनेहु बाएँ।।
पर हित हानि लाभ जिन्ह करें।
उजरें हरष विषाद बरोरे।।
हरि हर जस राकेश राहु से।
पर अकाज भट सहसबाहु से।
जे पर दोष लखहि सहसाखी।
पर हित धृत जिन्ह क मन माखी।"
"बदऊँ खल जस सेष सरोषा।
सहस बदन बरनउ पर दोषा।।"
देव दनुज नर नाग खग प्रेत पितर गंधर्व।
बदऊँ किंनर रजनिचर कृपा करहु अब सर्व।।
(बालकाण्ड-7(घ)।।

CHHANDOGYAUPNASHAD has; in a unique smile, made a careful begining to put the chief executive at the centrestage of thing, as is reflected in the dialogue between UDDALAIA and SWETAKETU (his illustrious son)–

यथा सोम्यैकेन लोहमणिना सर्व लोहमयं विज्ञातण्स्यामद् वाचारमभणं विकारो नामधेगं लोहमित्येव सत्यम्। (Chhadogya-VI-i-5)

"My good son, just as when the one substance viz.–Gold (the best of all metals) is known, everthing made of Gold is fully known, for a modification is only a name, hanging on speech alone Gold alone is real."

Let us conclude with the following prayers of the sages SANAKA and his three brothers (SANANADAN, SANATHAN and SANAT KUMAR) as referred in SRIRAMCHARITAMANASA.

परमानन्द कृपायतन मन परिपूरन काम।
प्रेम भगति अनपायनी देहु हमहिं श्रीराम।।

(UTTAR KANDA ।।34।।

स्थापना दिवस की एक झलक

रतना रैना

दिल करता था कि दर्शन हो जायें पर ऐसे मेरे भाग्य कहां। न जाने कशमीर छोड कर भगवान जी ने हम पर कैसी-कैसी कृपा की वर्णन करना शब्दों से परे है फिर भी संक्षिप्त में एक दो तथ्य सुनाना चाहती हूँ।

एक बार दिल्ली में एक जगह यज्ञनोपवीत हो रहा था-सब जगह वर्षा होने लगी घर वाले वहां पर सब चिन्तित हो गये लेकिन भगवान जी का ध्यान करने से वह स्थान वर्षा के बिना रहा, केवल बूंदा-बांदी हुई, आकाश पर काले बादल मंडरा रहे थे। यह सब भगवान जी की करनी है।

इतना ही नहीं एक व्यक्ति को कशमीर छोड़ने पर नौकरी छूट गई थी नित्य भगवान जी का ध्यान करने से उसे रोज़गार मिल गया।

आपको और भी कुछ बताना चाहती हूँ, एक व्यक्ति बहुत बीमार हुआ और उसे सुखधा हस्पताल में भरती किया गया। बीमारी का कुछ पता न चला फिर भगवान जी के

आश्रम में मन्नत मांगी। एकदम A.I.M.S. में दाखिला मिला और आपरेशन सफल रहा।

कशमीर में तो श्री भद्रीनाथ खोडबलीजी तथा श्री चाँद जी के सम्पर्क से हम खरयार भगवान जी के आश्रम में जाया करते थे क्योंकि भद्रीनाथ जी हमारे घर के एक कमरे हब्बाकदल में रहते थे। आश्रम के लोगों का हमारे घर आना-जाना था।

दिल्ली में आकर हमने अपना कुछ समय भगवान जी के चरणों में बिताना चाहा। मन प्रसन्नचित हो जाता है। सब दुःख दूर हो जाते हैं।

स्थापना दिवस पर भगवान जी ने अपने आप ही मानो बुलाना चाहा। आश्रम आने की सलाह मन तो न दे रहा था कि बरादरी के लोग क्या कहेंगे क्योंकि घर के किसी सदस्य की मृत्यु हे गई थी फिर भी आप विश्वास करिये कि अचानक अनजाने में गल्ली से गुजरते हुए मैंने देखा कि भगवान जी पाँच-आठ मनुष्यों के कन्धों पर विराजमान वाटर टैंकी की ओर मुंह किये हुये आश्रम में पधारने जा रहे थे और उनके दर्शन दूर से ही मुझे उपलब्ध हुये। मैंने अपने आपको धन्य समझा और जाना कि भगवान जी असहायों के सहायक हैं जो मैं उसी समय वहां से गुजरी। यह श्रद्धा भाव दिनों-दिन बढ़ने से हुआ। जब ही मन निराश हो जाता हम आश्रम की ओर चले आते हैं।

एक प्रार्थना

भगवान गोपीनाथ जी आज भी उतने ही परम शास्वत सत्य हैं, जितने अपने भौतिक शरीर में और जाग्रत स्वरूप में थे। वे आज भी अपने दिव्य चरित्र से हमारे जीवन के क्रियाकलाप को संचालित करते हैं। ऐसे अनेक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत हुए हैं जब भगवान गोपीनाथ जी ने अपनी दिव्य शक्ति से देश को उस समय राह दिखलायी, जब विदेशी आक्रमणकारियों ने इस देश की सार्वभौमिकता पर प्रहार किया। भगवान जी उन लोगों पर अपनी कृपा की विशेष वर्षा करते हैं जो समाज सेवा और आध्यात्मिक उन्नति के लिए संस्था बनाने का पवित्रतम कार्य करते हैं।

भगवान गोपीनाथ जी ने भक्तों ने एक गैर राजनैतिक चैरिटेबल सोसाइटी "जगत गुरु भगवान गोपीनाथ जी चैरिटेबल, कल्चरल और रिसर्च फाउन्डेशन" के नाम से स्थापित की है। यहाँ इस संस्था के मुख्य दिशा निर्देशों और कार्यकलाप प्रस्तुत किए जाते हैं-

1. यह संस्था भगवान जी के प्रेम, शान्ति और विश्वजनीय भाईचारे के पवित्र के पवित्र सिद्धांतों के फैलाने के लिए सुविधायें जुटायेंगी।
2. यह संस्था अनाथों और अपंगों को राहत पहुँचायेगीं।
3. यह संस्था कश्मीर की सांस्कृतिक विरासत और आधुनिक वैज्ञानिक समाज पर शोध कार्य करेगी।
4. अन्य सामाजिक कार्य, जैसे मुफ्त स्वास्थ्य सुविधायें, सामाजिक समरूपता विचार विर्मश और रोजगार उन्मुख पाठ्यक्रमों को नये आयाम देगी। हम भगवान की के सेवकों, भक्तों प्रशंसकों और जनता जनार्दन से इस पवित्र कार्य के लिए खोलकर दान देने की अपील करते हैं।

आपके रेखांकित चेक "जगतगुरु भगवान गोपीनाथ जी फाउन्डेशन" के नाम पर होने चाहिए और ये सचिव को इस पते पर भेजे जाने चाहिए ई-18, नवादा हाउसिंग काम्पलेक्स, ककरोला मोड़, उत्तम नगर, नई दिल्ली-110059। आप अपनी सहायता राशि संस्था के किसी भी अधिकृत अधिकारी को देकर दानराशि की रसीद प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

आप की दानराशि भारतीय आयकर टैक्स ऐक्ट, 1961 की धारा 80-जी के अन्तर्गत कर-मुक्त हैं।

Notable Profile
Colonel S.K. Razdan, Kirti Chakra

Colonel Sunil Kumar Razdan was born to Smt. Parmeshwari and Sh. Ramchand Razdan of Purshyar, Habbakadal on 08 October, 1954. He grew up in Mathura and did his post-graduation in Mathematics from B.S.A. College, Mathura (Agra University).

In 1976, he was selected through U.P.S.C. for army. He graduated from the Officers Training Academy, Chennai and joined the elite branch of the Indian army–The Parachute Regiment–in 1977. In 23 years of service he has served in almost all parts of the country and made significant contribution in Counter Insurgency operations in North-east and J&K. He was awarded with Chief of Army Staff commendation card twice (1980 & 1994) in appreciation of excellent work done during special operations.

Mr. Razdan got influenced by the teachings of Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji in 1992 through Smt. Ratni Revoo (maternal aunt) and firmly believed in him.

In a rescue operation in 1994, he saved 14 Muslim girls and women from the clutches of militants who had kept them in confinement for exploitation at Damal Kunzi Pur (Nandkani) area. In this operation he was injured and is paralysed below the waist for the rest of the life. His belief in the Bhagavaan has not only saved him from the shower of bullets that went through the body but also has given him the courage to face the world with dignity. The Bhagavaanji Pariwar had honoured him in 1999 for getting KIRTI CHAKRA (the second highest gallantry award by the country in peacetime).

शुभ शिवरात्री,
भगवान गोपीनाथ जी आपका जीवन
सर्व-सुख-सम्पन्न, स्वस्थ तथा शान्तिमय बनायें।

Happy, Shivratri,
May Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji Bless You with All the Best in Health Happiness Prosperity & Peace.

From Well Wishers :

You have been most generous in sending me a complimentary copy of PRAKASH. Its contents are impressive by the much needed attention that the articles give to Sri Bhagavaan Gopinathji's own example of, as his precepts also concerning, the life of the Spirit. Our generation requires this kind of spiritual light which can take India (perhaps the whole world) out of the surrounding darkness of the increasingly commercialized and technocratic reality of life today.

G.K. Das
M.A., Ph.D. (Cambridge)
Retd. Professor of English,
University of Delhi & Former Vice-Chancellor,
Utkal University, Bhubaneswar

I attempted to go through the pages of "PRAKASH". The Front Cover Page containing the physical form of the Bhagavaan attracted my attention, specially His Eyes, looking on the onlooker, Bhagavaan Jee, it is felt, if meditated upon, is sure to commune with the desirous one who deserves. Mr. P. Simpfendorfer's article is inspiring.

Dr. Koshalya Walli
Jammu

तस्मै श्री गुरवै: नम्:

Respect to all members of Bhagavaan Ji Family Let Light shine in all Directions.

Col. & Mrs. S.K. Razdan
New Delhi.

An Appeal

Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji is as much alive today as he was in physical form, ever steering the course of our lives.

There are facts on record to show that his spiritual power has been helping the country whenever she has been a victim of aggression. Bhagavaan Ji likes people to form associations for spiritual activities and social service.

The devotees of Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji have formed a non-political, Charitable, Society "Jagat Guru Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji–Charitable, Cultural & Research Foundation" to provide:

a) facilities for spiritual development by spreading Bhagavaan Ji's message of love, peace and universal brotherhood;

b) relief to the destitute and the disabled;

c) to conduct research on Kashmir's cultural heritage and modern scientific world society;

d) start activities of charitable nature like free medical aid, social counselling and vocational institutions.

To accomplish the programme of the foundation, we appeal to Bhagavaan Ji's disciples, devotees, admirers and the general public to donate liberally by crossed cheques in the name of "Jagat Guru Bhagavaan Gopinath Ji Foundation" be sent to the secretary c/o E-18, Nawaada housing complex Kakrola mode, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-59 or handed over to any authorised signatory against proper receipt of the Foundation.

Donations are exempted under section 80-G of Indian Income-tax Act, 1961.

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